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NEO-PENTECOSTALISM: A STUDY OF THE CONTENT AND  
STRUCTURE OF CHARISMATIC EXPERIENCE IN THE CHURCH

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A Dissertation  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the  
School of Theology at Claremont

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

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by  
Gary Alan Dickey  
June 1974

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Almost every generation of the church has experienced the development of some new movement within its community of faith. Some of these movements brought periods of great renewal and progress in unity to the church as well as times of confusion and schism. The apostles had to contend with Judaizers and growing Gnosticism. The post-apostolic period saw the rise of Docetism, Montanism, Arianism and a host of other schismatic movements. The Dark Ages saw the institution of various renewal movements such as the Augustinians, Dominicans, and others. The sixteenth century saw the Reformation and its various *Protestant* groups emerge. In America of the nineteenth century, the Mormon, Jehovah's Witness, and Seventh Day Adventist movements were founded and grew with amazing speed as they broke away from the main body of Christians. In this century the rise of the Pentecostal Church to world-wide dimensions was witnessed in only seventy years. In recent years the newest movement to appear in American Christianity has been the charismatic movement or neo-Pentecostalism with its particular emphasis on the significance of the experience of the "baptism of the Spirit" and the gifts of the Spirit. Less than twenty years old, this movement has had great impact and influence upon churches of many denominations.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Glenn Gromacki, *The Modern Tongues Movement* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1967), p. 1.

Those involved in the neo-Pentecostal movement say it has brought into their ritualized, orthodox institutions a breath of fresh air. They say it has enlivened dry, cold confessions with a spirit of life and joy. Its adherents speak of new love for Christ, his church, fellow believers, and the world. The neo-Pentecostals have experienced and told about a profound, dynamic and personal encounter with Christ which has changed their lives and the lives around them--they have experienced the "baptism of the Holy Spirit." They have experienced a deepened prayer life and an increased sensitivity to the demands of the Spirit that moves them forward to seek holiness before God in all parts of their lives.

Indeed, it is doubted that anyone would be rash enough to say that such results, no matter the means, are not good and to be welcome. Yet, though in many cases good results have been experienced, sometimes the results have been far from good. Churches have been split, ministers have been fired or resigned (for either supporting or not supporting the movement), love between Christians has turned into open hostility, union in Christ among believers has been destroyed, reason and intellect have been replaced by emotionalism and fanaticism, and scholarly biblical criticism has been displaced by uncritical, fundamentalistic literalism. Experience has superseded the authority of both scripture and the church.

A real conflict has arisen in the church over the question of the manner in which one may experience God. When such spiritual manifestations were found only in the Pentecostal churches they could

easily be ignored. But the strong emergence of the neo-Pentecostal movement in the historic churches demands a careful analysis and consideration of the weaknesses and strengths of the neo-Pentecostal movement and of its possible place within the historic churches. This demand can no longer be looked upon casually due to the circumstances of its growth and the contentions arising from that growth.<sup>2</sup>

### Statement of the Problem

The problem involves differences in the way different people come to experience God in the context of their faith. The problem may be quite bluntly stated, "Is charismatic experience as defined by the neo-Pentecostal a form of experiencing God which is both consistent with scripture and compatible in its form as an authentic expression of the encounter with God in the context of the historic churches? Or, is it, by its nature, a type of experience which leads invariably to schism and confusion in the church?"

### The Literature

The literature in the field of the charismatic experience movement is divided into four basic perspectives--Pentecostal, neo-Pentecostal, non-Pentecostal or Protestant, and Roman Catholic.

The largest body of literature to be found on the subject is

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<sup>2</sup> Hellmut Gollwitzer, *Evangelische Theologie*, XXIX:11 (November 1969), 619ff. as quoted in W. J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972), p. 501.

that published by the traditional Pentecostal Church--but it is also the least useful. While the writing is voluminous its scholarly quality is poor, its treatment of the problems superficial and its conclusions too facile. It emphasizes an emotional appeal to the subject rather than critical work. There is, however, one source in its literature which offers studies superior in quality to its other publications. This is the quarterly publication *Paraclete*, which is comprised of exegetical and practical articles to be used as a working *Journal Concerning the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*. According to Dr. Walter J. Hollenweger, past evangelism secretary for the World Council of Churches (who has catalogued approximately 4,700 titles of accounts written by Pentecostals), one must distinguish between scholarly works on the doctrine of present normal Pentecostal teaching, most of which presents a two-stage doctrine of salvation in academic form, and those writers who, attempting to come to terms with New Testament scholarship, are trying to go beyond this position.<sup>3</sup> It may be said, however, that the number of books in the latter category are few indeed.

The neo-Pentecostal literature comprises basically two types of approach. The first type involves mainly an attempt at a systematic biblical and descriptive study of the charismatic gifts and the validity for them today.<sup>4</sup> The second type involves the kinds of books

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<sup>3</sup>Hollenweger, p. 498.

<sup>4</sup>J. Rodman Williams, *The Era of the Spirit* (Plainfield, N.J.: Logos International, 1971).

written by Sherrill and Basham<sup>5</sup> and involves stories of personal experience which might be termed "journalistic."<sup>6</sup> Most of the neo-Pentecostal material accomplishes its purpose of giving a well presented descriptive analysis of the subject through its exegesis of the relevant New Testament passages. Its main weakness, however, is its interpretation of that analysis in the area of application and form which in the neo-Pentecostal movement will be shown to be basically incorrect in its structure.

The non-Pentecostal literature is also well presented and exegeted. While it suffers at times from too facile generalizations which *a priori* dismisses out of hand the charismatic experience as being valid in any way, this is usually true only of those works based on dispensationalist theology.<sup>7</sup> The other literature approaches the subject in a scholarly fashion and presents a descriptive analysis emphasizing psychological, socio-anthropological, historical, and theological approaches to the understanding of the experience, and which urges a tentative, though cautious, acceptance of the central spirituality of the experience but not necessarily the forms in which

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<sup>5</sup>John L. Sherrill, *They Speak with Other Tongues* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1969); see also Don W. Basham, *Face up with a Miracle* (Northridge, CA: Voice, 1967).

<sup>6</sup>Felicitas D. Goodman, *Speaking in Tongues* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), p. xviii.

<sup>7</sup>Abraham Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1900).

it has been structured.<sup>8</sup> Because the relationship of charismatic experience to spiritual experience in general is close, other authors on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, such as Paul Tillich and Emil Brunner, were consulted. These men, though not dealing specifically with charismatic experience are nevertheless significant for their analysis of the structure in which the Holy Spirit may be experienced.<sup>9</sup>

Surprisingly, some of the most integrative, and theologically sound material came from the Roman Catholics. Their highly structured tradition forces them to work within its disciplines (in a manner in which Protestants are wont) to offer solutions and interpretations which can be worked out in a context of tradition and plurality of experience, for which they have had a long history. The material offers a descriptive analysis of the charismatic experience. It is presented from the level of a strong church theology to which the neo-Pentecostal experience can be addressed and is seen in the fact that these books carry the *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur* which declares that a book is free of doctrinal or moral error.<sup>10</sup> Better than any of the other approaches, the Catholics envisioned incorporating the spirituality of the charismatic experience into their church structure as an

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<sup>8</sup>Frank Stagg, *et al.*, *Glossolalia* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967); see also, Morton T. Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1968).

<sup>9</sup>Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), III; see also Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith, and the Consummation* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), III.

<sup>10</sup>Edward O'Connor, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1971); see also, Donald L. Gelpi, *Pentecostalism* (New York: Paulist Press, 1971).

alternative way of encountering God.<sup>11</sup>

On the basis of study into the neo-Pentecostal movement in the last three years and contacts with neo-Pentecostals from main-line denominations, it is the opinion of this writer that many of the experiences related are genuinely the work of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, it is also evident that some of these experiences are at times not genuine, are divisive among Christians as well as neo-Pentecostals themselves, and are a disgrace both to scholarship and common sense. The content of the neo-Pentecostal experience, however, should not be rejected out-of-hand because of the misuse of its form. It should be seen that misuse does not predicate disuse, but rather proper use.

#### Basic Thesis

The thesis of this dissertation is that the charismatic experience can be part of an authentic encounter with God if its basis, structure, and content are properly understood and followed. It will be held that a genuine encounter with God will lead those who experience it into a deeper life with God and a closer bond of fellowship with other believers. It may be held, then, that any religious experience which claims to be an encounter with God and yet at the same time brings division and schism to the body of believers is to be held suspect as a proper expression of that encounter.

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<sup>11</sup>Kilian McDonnell, *Catholic Pentecostals* (Pecos, NM: Dove, 1970).



### Methodology and Delimitations

The approach of this paper is from a form-content analysis. That is, it will examine the form of the neo-Pentecostal experience of the Holy Spirit in relationship to its form as seen in the New Testament, the history of the church, and its psychological structure. If the neo-Pentecostal movement is a true manifestation of God's Spirit moving in the church today, it should contribute to the total ministry of the church as an integrated body of believers without causing schism.

The problem will be approached through four major perspectives. The first will be through a study of those New Testament passages upon which neo-Pentecostals base and interpret their experience. This will necessarily be delimited to I Corinthians 12-14, and follows the aim to approach the problem through a form-content analysis. This will not be an attempt to give a descriptive analysis of what, for example, speaking in tongues is, but rather an analysis of the structure of the experience as it is found in these passages. That is, how does the content of the experience structure the form? It is not really tongues or any of the other gifts which is the issue involved in the problem of neo-Pentecostalism. The primary issues are first, how does one experience the fullness of the power of God through the charismatic experience, and second, how does one structure that experience in the context of the church?<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. *Report of the Special*

The reasons for misuse of the form and the corrections needed to reestablish the connection of the content with its proper form will be considered in the light of the biblical guidelines. Due to the centrality of the term "baptism in the Spirit" in both Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal doctrine, a brief study of its meaning will be included.

Secondly, the problem will be approached through an historical study of selected movements which entailed elements of charismatic experience and their results upon the church. This will be done to evaluate the way the church has handled the problem of charismatic experience in enthusiastic movements of the past and how these movements structured their experience, which will hopefully help in understanding and evaluating the present neo-Pentecostal movement. Thus, this historical study will be the means to establish an evaluative tool of the present-day charismatic experience movement. This is done on the premise that enthusiastic movements have characteristically taken similar forms throughout the history of the church and that we may judge the present-day movement in retrospect from antecedent movements.

Such a study will enable the church to make fewer mistakes in analyzing the present movement and make a more effective response to it. The purpose here is not to condemn out-of-hand the movements which brought division to the church but to study their structures of

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*Committee on the Work of the Holy Spirit to the 182nd General Assembly*  
(Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1970), p. 14.

experience to see which forms are most responsive to the unity of faith in diversity of experience. Again, only those movements which will best conform to a form-content analysis of the problem will be studied.

Thirdly, the problem will be approached through a psychological analysis. This section will analyze the charismatic experience in regard to its relationship to inner personal psychological constructs. This will be done in order to determine which types of psychological constructs are more conducive to forming functional structures (as defined in Chapter IV) and which lend themselves to forming dysfunctional structures of experience. This section will seek to identify those areas of the experience which are liable to abuse, the reasons for such abuse, and the ways such abuse may be corrected.

Fourthly, a theological assessment of the neo-Pentecostal movement will be made in order to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the movement and the position the church should take in regard to it. This last section will bring together the three areas enumerated above as a means of evaluation to consider the possible place the experience may have in the church and the guidelines the church and the neo-Pentecostal movement should follow in order to bring unity of faith in diversity of experience within context of a single Christian community.

## CHAPTER II

### A BIBLICAL AND EXEGETICAL STUDY OF CHARISMATIC EXPERIENCE IN I COR. 12-14

The Epistle of Paul to the Church of Christ at Corinth provides one of the earliest accounts of the primitive church and its forms of worship. As such, it throws invaluable light on the practical problems of the ancient church.<sup>1</sup> In this epistle Paul addressed himself to certain problems which had arisen in the church at Corinth. Among these were problems concerning party divisiveness (1:10-4:21), marriage (7:1-40), and the resurrection (15:1-58). The problem which will be examined here is that which had to do with the function and form of charismatic experience and spiritual gifts which had been expressed in ways which Paul thought were detrimental to the well-being of the church as the Body of Christ.

This chapter will, therefore, present an exegetical study of the problems which are found in I Corinthians 12-14 in order to come to an understanding of the charismatic experience as it was expressed in the first century church. This understanding can be used to evaluate how and where similar problems may possibly occur in the present-day charismatic movement. This is not to say that certain current

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<sup>1</sup>Donald Guthrie, *The Pauline Epistles* (Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1968), p. 47.

charismatic phenomena are to be identified as exact corollaries to those which occurred in the ancient church. It is to say, however, that there are characteristic similarities between the ancient and contemporary experiences, which, when analyzed from a content-form analysis provide an adequate measure for a comparison between *related* experiences.

This study will comprise an examination of the experience as it is found in these chapters in regard to the relationship of its outward form to its inward content-meaning. It will be seen that this is the main emphasis of Paul in these chapters; that the proper use and function of spiritual gifts in particular and charismatic experience in general only occurs when the form in which the experience is structured is consistent with the spiritual reality it is attempting to express.

Paul saw that the Corinthians were forming their experiences involving spiritual gifts from an improper interpretation of their content-meaning which resulted in confusion and divisions within the church. He sought, therefore, to identify and define the content-meaning of the spiritual gifts, their significance, function, and the forms which were consistent with the spiritual reality they were meant to express.

Paul begins his discussion of the spiritual gifts and their significance starting at the twelfth chapter of I Corinthians. He began by saying, "Now concerning spiritual gifts . . . I do not want you to be uninformed." Paul wanted the Corinthians to have knowledge

concerning the spiritual gifts and to understand what they signified as well as how they were to function in the life of the church. Paul realized that lack of information and ignorance of this teaching could create problems with their use and function in the church. From there, he went on to give the substance of what spiritual gifts signify.

#### A. SIGNIFICANCE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

In verses 4 to 6 Paul gives his basic description of the meaning of the gifts of the Spirit. He describes these from three perspectives: (1) *charismata*, (2) *diakonai*, and (3) *energēmata*. "In the use of these terms Paul is expressing something about their origin, the way in which they are experienced, and the purpose of the gifts."<sup>2</sup> Further defined, these are:

(1) *Charismata*.

The term "spiritual gift" represents the common rendering in English of the Greek neuter plural noun *charismata*, from *charizesthai* (to show favor, give freely), which is related to the noun *charis* (grace). The *charismata* are, therefore, more accurately termed "grace gifts."<sup>3</sup> The word *charismata* identifies the source and origin of the gifts, that is, they show the divine *charis* becoming concrete.<sup>4</sup> Thus,

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<sup>2</sup>Arnold Bittlinger, *Gifts and Graces* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), p. 20.

<sup>3</sup>J. D. Douglas, *The New Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), p. 1212.

<sup>4</sup>Ernst Käseman, *Essays on New Testament Themes* (Naperville: Allenson, 1964), p. 63f.

spiritual gifts represent the concretization or manifestation of the Spirit of God. God's *charis* is at all times the origin of every *charisma*.<sup>5</sup> This is a vital point to remember whenever spiritual gifts are considered or experienced.

Paul stresses this origin of the *charismata* in verses 4-6 in what appears to be an almost trinitarian formula,

- 4) Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit;
- 5) and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord;
- 6) and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one.

The gifts of the Spirit, therefore, can only be expressed in a proper way when they are seen as the grace or gift of God in the Christian's experience as a result of union with Christ. The "grace gifts" are to be seen in their close relationship to salvation (*sozo*), or the wholeness that comes from union with Christ as the means of being equiped to live the life of faith. The gifts of the Spirit, therefore, serve as significatories or evidences of the relationship of God's gift of grace to man. The signs, then, point not to man who has received them, but to God who is their source. These "grace gifts," then, indicate favor shown by God to the individual as a means of grace for the church and are the visible testimony to that grace.

(2) *Diakonai*.

This term means literally "waiting at table," which in the New Testament takes on the idea of the "discharge of service" in genuine

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<sup>5</sup>Bittlinger, p. 20.

love.<sup>6</sup> Arnold Bittlinger<sup>7</sup> comments that it is derived from *dia* and *enikoneo* which means "to be in haste," therefore meaning "eager readiness to serve." This service, then, is accomplished by action. The *charismata* are not manifested primarily through waiting, or self-emptying or any other such pietistic concepts, but rather, a willingness in action to give expression to what God has done in one through his grace. Seen from this perspective the gifts are a service for the community as an expression of the inward act of God's Spirit within the Christian. It is not denied that a person can encounter Christ as an individual and be empowered with the Spirit in a new and personal way, but the purpose and meaning of that encounter can only be interpreted in the light of the total community as it is expressed in service. As a service, a grace gift is given for the entire church and not just the individual. It is only when the individual Christian makes himself available to God to be used in action that he performs a service not just for himself but for the community. It is interesting to note that the formulation of the concept of the Body of Christ is found at its earliest date in connection with the responsible expression of charismatic gifts. As Dale Bruner states,

It is for the commonality, the *communio*, and not first for the individual, the integer, for which spiritual gifts primarily exist. A *charisma* is given first of all not

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<sup>6</sup>Beyer, "διακονία . . . ." in Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), II, 87.

<sup>7</sup>Bittlinger, p. 21.



for the sake of the saint, but for the sake of the communion of Saints and that communion's good.<sup>8</sup>

(3) *Energemata*.

The *charisma* bring about definite effects or outworkings. The *energemata* or outworkings must always be seen in their vital relationship to the community. These outworkings perform a very pragmatic purpose--they are given to build up the community and as such are expected to bring about definite effects which contribute to the well-being of the entire church. When the Spirit comes upon the community of faith, that body cannot help but experience the outworkings of faith. The *charismata* are vital and visible signs to the community that its members share in common the Spirit of Christ.

From this base, Paul enumerates a multiplicity of possible *energemata* or outworkings of the *charisma* in verses 8-10. It does not appear that Paul has intended to give an exhaustive or systematically complete listing of all the possible variations of gifts.<sup>9</sup> If such an all-inclusive listing was Paul's intention one would expect the list here and in Romans 12:6ff. to be identical.<sup>10</sup> It would seem that Paul's partial listing of the gifts results from his awareness that the Spirit is capable of imparting an unlimited variety of gifts. Therefore, it seems probable that there are gifts not included in the New

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<sup>8</sup>Frederick Dale Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), pp. 289-90.

<sup>9</sup>Jean Héring, *The First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians* (London: Epworth Press, 1962), p. 127.

<sup>10</sup>William Baird, *The Corinthian Church* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1964), p. 145.

Testament lists which could be subsequently given to meet changing needs and circumstances. Thus, the Spirit imparts spiritual gifts according to each individual's needs and the needs of the community as the existential situation may demand.

The important point here is that it is the Spirit, not the individual Christian, that determines which gifts, which person, or which situation will be determined in a particular way. All of the different gifts are the work of the *one* Spirit that distributes them to the recipients by individually giving what is appropriate to each recipient in accordance with the Spirit's sovereign discrimination.<sup>11</sup> This necessarily takes out of the hands of any one Christian any determination of what gifts other people should have or how they should be manifested for that determination is left once and all with the Spirit in the context of the community.

At this point the character of the gifts should be considered. The division of some of the gifts as ordinary and others, extraordinary, has been put forth in Kuyper's *The Work of the Holy Spirit*.<sup>12</sup> Whether or not this is an accurate division, however, is open to question. As one closely looks at I Corinthians 12:1-11, the supernatural rather than the ordinary nature of the gifts is emphasized. The Holy Spirit is referred to nine times in this passage in relationship to spiritual gifts: 1) "In the Spirit of God" (vs. 3); 2) "In the Holy Spirit"

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<sup>11</sup>Ernest Best, *One Body in Christ* (London: S.P.C.K., 1955), p. 28.

<sup>12</sup>Abraham Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1900), p. 187.

(vs. 3); 3) "The same Spirit" (vs. 4); 4) "The manifestation of the Spirit" (vs. 7); 5) "Through the Spirit" (vs. 8); 6) "The same Spirit" (vs. 8); 7) "In the same Spirit" (vs. 9); 8) "In the one Spirit" (vs. 9); 9) "The one and same Spirit" (vs. 11). The context of chapters 12-14 supports further the idea that the Spirit was the initiator and source of not only the gifts but also the way in which they were distributed in the community. The point to be noticed here is that the gifts are gifts of "the Spirit," and therefore are to be seen as supernatural in their nature. Paul is trying to show here that no one gift is more spiritual than another because all come from God.

In verse 12 the exercise of the various spiritual gifts by those in the church for the common good is compared to the functioning of the various parts of the body for the health of the whole person. Paul later identifies these parts as the Body of Christ. Eduard Schweizer comments that:

The term [body of Christ], recommends itself particularly when the unity of the congregation is stressed, since the term 'body' designates in Greek the wholeness, unity, and totality of a conglomeration. As those who live solely by Christ's deeds for their sake, the members of the church belong together. As members of the body exist only as parts of the one body and are nothing if separated from the body, thus participation in Christ's body . . . means participation in the life of all fellow members.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Eduard Schweizer, *The Church as the Body of Christ* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1964), p. 55.

## B. "BODY OF CHRIST"

### 1. The Phrase

Before the implications of verse 12 and the following verses are considered, attention will be given to verse 27 and the meaning of the phrase "Body of Christ" which is central to Paul's concept of the church. Examining this phrase will allow a clearer picture and interpretation of the exhortation Paul gives about the body in verses 12-27 as well as the development of his thought in chapters 13 and 14. Paul Minear comments on the centrality of the concept to Paul's intention here when he states that although the explicit use of *sōma* is delimited to only verses 12-27, the whole of chapters 12-14 must be taken as a single unit and therefore be seen in its relationship to the entire segment.<sup>14</sup>

In examining the phrase "Body of Christ" it must be determined how Paul is using the term. One interpretation holds that the "body" is a metaphor while the other contends that it is an ontologic term. Alan Cole states the problem, "When Paul uses 'the Body of Christ' as a description of the church, does the genitive 'of Christ' imply identification, or possession?"<sup>15</sup> That one or the other interpretation makes a difference methodologically in interpreting the passage is seen in the words of Ernest Best who holds to the metaphorical sense,

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<sup>14</sup>Paul S. Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), p. 190.

<sup>15</sup>Alan Cole, *The Body of Christ* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), I, 25f.

If the 'body' is used metaphorically we must proceed cautiously in our interpretation of its details . . . if it is not used metaphorically but really and ontologically, we may proceed to attempt to find a parallel for every detail of the passage in the life of the church, and, what is more, we may use our knowledge of the body to extend our knowledge of the church . . . then everything that is true about the body is true with regard to the church.<sup>16</sup>

Best goes on to say that since there are other phrases which describe the church, e.g., olive tree, building, bride; the church cannot consequently be really and ontologically all of these at once.<sup>17</sup> In this interpretation the different phrases "Body of Christ," "in Christ," etc., are projections of the fundamental idea of the corporate personality of Christ with believers.<sup>18</sup>

The opposite interpretation is forcefully argued by Ernst Käseman who asserts that, "This is not a metaphorical figure of speech. To deny that these are assertions of identity affects the whole of Pauline theology."<sup>19</sup> Käseman maintains that Paul does not use metaphor when he says that baptism and the eucharist involve us "in Christ" and allow us to participate in the divine Spirit.<sup>20</sup>

To determine the exact meaning of the term as metaphor or ontology is difficult. Gerhard Friedrich points to the impreciseness of the term in I Cor. 12:27 but says that in I Cor. 12:13 Paul does not merely say that the community is "like" a body but rather, that it

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<sup>16</sup>Best, p. 98.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 100.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup>Ernst Käseman, *Perspectives on Paul* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), p. 104.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*

is a body.<sup>21</sup>

The scales of the argument seem to be weighted to the case of Käseman, who (as he refutes Conzelmann's mythological conception of the body), contends that to Paul the body was viewed quite realistically, and states:

The Apostle uses the expression 'the Body of Christ' because he really means to point out the structural characteristics of a body; that is why he makes a detailed comparison in I Corinthians 12:14ff. . . . the comparison brings out the reality which is intended through the concrete application of the statement of identity to the life of the Christian community. The exalted Christ really has an earthly body, and believers with their whole being are actually incorporated into it and have, therefore, to behave accordingly.<sup>22</sup>

Käseman appears to be essentially correct in his interpretation of the ontologic, corporate nature of the term "Body of Christ." There is, however, an impression in Paul as he continues his discussion in verses 12-27 that he is speaking analogically. Perhaps one must consider the term in the light of both an analogic as well as an ontologic concept with Paul himself not delimiting his concept precisely to either, but stressing the ontologic.

In the ontologic view, the Body of Christ as the church is then in some way Christ himself and the parts of its body are in some way the parts of Christ. If then, this is essentially so, the study of I Corinthians 12-14 may be seen in the light of an explanation of the interrelationship of the parts of the body to each other which must

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<sup>21</sup>Schweizer, "σῶμα . . ." in Kittel, VII, 1069.

<sup>22</sup>Käseman, *Perspectives on Paul*, p. 104.

exhibit its character of essential unity as Christ himself is one and not divided. Any action, therefore, which causes disunion or causes obstruction to the outworkings of Christ on earth, is to be seen as inconsistent with the Body of Christ.

As Käseman again observes, Paul's concern is with the *action of the church* as the representation of Christ.

. . . in so far as it is the means whereby Christ reveals himself on earth and becomes incarnate in the world through his Spirit. The human body is the necessity and reality of existential communication. In the same way, the church appears as the possibility and reality of communication between the risen Christ and our world, and hence is called the body.<sup>23</sup>

## 2. Paul's Use in I Cor. 12

Paul views this image from two perspectives. He first considers its unity. Paul is saying that there is only one body and that that body is one. The church is the Body of Christ and the main characteristic of a healthy body is that every part performs its own function for the good of the whole. The individual member must not dissociate himself from the body, for he is an integral part of it. There is no place in Paul's idea of the *charismata* for an individualistic, egoistic approach to the gifts. Indeed, the whole body is weakened if any part is lost or forced out of communion with the rest of the body. The one who worships as an individual must remember that this worship takes place with the Body of Christ in which he is a member. As R. P. Martin observes, "the thought that the church at worship is an

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<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 117.

accidental convergence in one place of a number of isolated individuals who practice, in hermetically sealed compartments, their own private devotional exercises, is foreign to the New Testament picture."<sup>24</sup>

The one, all inclusive charismatic experience, which all members alike receive and which constitutes the basis for the unity of the body is the experience of Christ himself (verse 3). Every operation of the body or spiritual experience is truly charismatic only to the extent that it recognizes that basis. "Paul understands the work of the Spirit to be honoring of Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is not surprising that he understands the work of the spiritually gifted to be the service of the body of Christ."<sup>25</sup>

Paul next views the body from the perspective of its diversity. Diversity of parts and functions is essential to a properly integrated system. But this diversity is one that derives from the pre-existing nature of the unity as organic; it is not a diversity which has to be made into a unity but a diversity which must keep or retain its unity.<sup>26</sup> Every believer has his own gift and his own commission which he has received. Each person, like each member of a body, is a different and unique individual. Paul considered it a grave mistake to ignore this fact. Thus, the wide diversity of the gifts given to the church was actually consistent with its unity. It did, in fact, make unity

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<sup>24</sup>Ralph P. Martin, *Worship in the Early Church* (Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1964), p. 135.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 291.

<sup>26</sup>J.A.T. Robinson, *The Body* (Chicago: Regnery, 1952), p. 60.



a realizable possibility as each gift contributed something which was necessary to the common life and growth of the church. However, where gifts are variously distributed, there is always the possibility that dissatisfaction will arise. Some persons may become jealous of others because of their apparently greater gifts, or feel that their own gifts are inferior. In Paul's terminology, the feet and ears desire to be hands and eyes. Paul responds to this by showing that diversity is absolutely essential to a well functioning body and that the coveting of the gifts of others denies the nature of the body which is made up of many parts. Believers should not expect to all have identical gifts. If they did, the church would be like a disfigured and grotesque body which was only an eye or ear and which is hardly the image of a comprehensive integrated community of people (verse 17).

This theory of the diversity of gifts is also a deterrent to pride or arrogance by those who have special gifts. "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you'" (verse 21). The attitude of inferiority as opposed to pride is forcefully put down by Paul in his concept of the body. In the light of this passage, it is not possible for an individual Christian or special elite group to amputate itself from the body or to live in a private world. The result of such action is the elimination of important gifts which are necessary for the proper functioning of the entire body. Out of such division one has two disabled groups which cannot function to their fullest because

they are missing integral parts which the other has.

Paul's answer is found in verse 22, "On the contrary, the parts of the body which seem to be weakest are indispensable." The so-called better members need the lesser ones just as much as the lesser members need the better. The Body of Christ is seen then as a united and interdependent fellowship for "if one suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored all rejoice together" (verse 26). Bittlinger comments that ideally:

The body is so well integrated that the questions of great and small gifts or presentable and unpresentable parts really does not arise. A disintegration into solitary members is no longer possible for they all care for one another. Whenever this is not in a congregation, the nature of the body of Christ has not yet been grasped.<sup>27</sup>

### C. "BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT"

#### 1. Meaning of the Term

This unity-in-diversity which Paul talks about at this point has a strong relationship to verse 13, "For in one Spirit we were all baptized so as to become one body . . . and were given one Spirit as drink." This particular verse has been the focal point for much discussion and disagreement. Because of its importance to any discussion of the spiritual gifts, it will be carefully evaluated. To understand clearly what Paul means when he speaks of being baptized in the Spirit will allow one to further put the spiritual gifts into proper perspective as the Baptism and the spiritual gifts are intimately related.

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<sup>27</sup>Bittlinger, p. 64.

There have been essentially three main interpretations of this verse.

a. *Instrumental sense.* The first interpretation is that of those who concur with the teaching of the classical Pentecostal view that Paul is speaking here neither of water baptism nor of baptism in the Spirit. Rather, this view maintains that Paul is speaking of a third baptism which is *by* or *of* the Spirit in an instrumental sense and is associated with conversion or regeneration.<sup>28</sup> Although not agreeing that this is a *third* baptism, such prominent scholars on baptism such as Cullmann, Moffat, and the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, support the instrumental sense of the verse.<sup>29</sup> Contrary to this, James Dunn, in one of the most extensive contemporary exegetical studies on the baptism of the Spirit, says that this instrumental interpretation should be questioned. Dunn says:

In the NT *en* with *baptizein* never designates the one who performs the baptism; on the contrary, it always indicates the element in which the baptisand is immersed . . . except . . . when it is part of a fuller phrase. . . .<sup>30</sup>

b. *Local sense.* The second view is that which considers the relationship of the baptism to the concept of the body in a local

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<sup>28</sup>David J. du Plessis, *The Spirit Bade Me Go* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1970), p. 70f.

<sup>29</sup>Oscar Cullmann, *Baptism in the New Testament* (Chicago: Allenson, 1956), p. 30; see also James Moffat, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1938), p. 186; and Oepke, "βαπτίζω . . ." in Kittel, I, 539.

<sup>30</sup>James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Thought of St. Paul* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1964), p. 26.

sense. Schnackenburg observes:

Grammatically the question is to be posed thus: has *eis* here a consecutive meaning, does it denote the result of the event, or is it the local *eis*? Whereas the former used to be generally accepted, more recent investigations concerning the 'Body of Christ' have frequently led to the second view. According to this, the 'Body of Christ' does not first come into existence through baptism, but it exists beforehand and the baptised are received into it.<sup>31</sup>

This view gives *eis* the force of "in," "for (the sake of)," or "with a view to."<sup>32</sup> This view sees the force of the verse as showing that the baptism in the Spirit is a motion toward or to some goal (in this context; the Body of Christ). Dunn comments:

In this case the goal is one body, and the effect of baptism in the Spirit is incorporation into the body or alternatively union with Christ (so Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3f.). Paul is talking about the operation and effect of Spirit baptism, not the place of its performance. In no case can *baptizein eis* bear the sense of 'to baptise (as already in).' Nor can we take *eis* = 'for' here. The object of *eis* is a state not an action . . . and after a verb of motion like *baptizein*, *eis* can only have the sense of movement towards so as to be in.<sup>33</sup>

This view of the incorporative nature of the baptism destroys any Pentecostal distinction between conversion and Spirit baptism. Thus, the baptism in the Spirit is seen as a once-for-all initiatory experience which brings a person into the Body of Christ. As Beasley-Murray observes:

The twice repeated 'all' of v. 13 is noteworthy: to be baptized into the one Body is possible only because it is a baptism in the Spirit. It is not said to be a preliminary

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<sup>31</sup>Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Baptism in the Thought of St. Paul* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1964), p. 26.

<sup>32</sup>Dunn, p. 128.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

gift of Spirit requiring later supplementation . . . on the one hand this indicates that the Spirit is given to all and is not reserved for a privileged elite in the Church; on the other hand it clearly rules out any interpretation of baptism which requires it to be complemented by a later rite for the impartation of the Spirit.<sup>34</sup>

c. *Sacramental sense.* The third view of this verse identifies water baptism with Spirit baptism and thereby sees water baptism as the means for the incorporation of a person into the Body of Christ as well as being the means of bestowing the Spirit.<sup>35</sup> The question, though, of the correctness of identifying *baptizein* in this verse to necessarily specify *water* baptism is an open one. Paul in this verse is probably not speaking of water baptism at all but of Spirit baptism. Ernest Best states, ". . . the baptism of I Corinthians 12.13, by which we are added to the one Body, is not water baptism but baptism in the Spirit. . . ."<sup>36</sup> This is not to say that water baptism is not related to Spirit baptism. As Best continues:

. . . water baptism is the sign and seal of this latter baptism--just as in Rom. 6.1-14 water baptism does not effect our death and resurrection with Christ, which took place upon the cross, but it is a sign and seal to us.<sup>37</sup>

Dunn confirms this when he says:

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<sup>34</sup>G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament* (London: Macmillan, 1962), p. 171.

<sup>35</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), I, 138; see also Schnackenburg, p. 126.

<sup>36</sup>Best, p. 73.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*

It is their experience of the Spirit (not of water baptism) which provides the jumping off point for Paul's appeal to the Corinthians for a right attitude towards the exercise of spiritual gifts. It is their experience of the *one* Spirit (not water baptism) which is the basis of their unity.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, water baptism is related to Spirit baptism as a sign to Spirit baptism, but Spirit baptism is not effected by water baptism. Hence, though Paul's metaphor is derived from the baptism ritual, the metaphor does not include the ritual act within itself.<sup>39</sup> Water baptism then, as an outward act, confirms the inward act of faith, without which, water baptism is ineffectual as a means of grace. Thus, baptism is only valid if there is a working of the Spirit within one.<sup>40</sup>

Again, all of this is not to say that Spirit baptism and water baptism are not in some way connected. It is to say, however, that a complete identification of the two as being identical is not possible if the New Testament understanding is held primary.

If the NT is to be our rule, therefore, the rite of water baptism may not be given the central role in conversion-initiation. It symbolizes the spiritual cleansing which the Spirit brings and the finality of the break with the old life; it is a stimulus to faith and enables commitment to come to necessary expression . . . but otherwise it is not a channel of grace, and neither the gift of the Spirit nor any of the spiritual blessings which he brings may be ascribed to it.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Dunn, p. 130; For an opposite view see Donald G. Bloesch, "The Charismatic Revival: A Theological Critique," *Religion in Life*, XXXV:3 (Summer 1966), 374f.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup>F. W. Grosheide, *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960), p. 293.

<sup>41</sup>Dunn, p. 228; see also Grosheide, p. 293.

From this it is seen that an absolute identification of the two would result in an extreme sacramental view of water baptism which is inconsistent with the New Testament view. Though *baptizein* in the New Testament can mean both to baptize literally in water or metaphorically in the Spirit the two meanings are never used interchangeably or simultaneously.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, Spirit baptism and water baptism must remain distinct even though the one is related as the visible sign to the invisible reality of the other.

## 2. Conclusions on "Baptism in the Spirit"

Considering these points one comes to some rather definite conclusions concerning the term "Baptism in the Spirit." The first is that the baptism is a once-for-all experience which should be distinguished from the filling of the Spirit which may and should occur again and again.<sup>43</sup> In verse 13 the verb *'ebaptisthēmen* is in the aorist tense and suggests that the baptism in the Spirit is a single experience which happened at a specific time in the past which is received by all believers at their conversion.

Secondly, the purpose of the baptism in the Spirit is the act whereby those who believe in Christ are incorporated into the Body of

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<sup>42</sup>Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge: University Press, 1957), p. 131.2.b, 3.6B; see also W. A. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1966), p. 97.

<sup>43</sup>John R. W. Stott, *The Baptism and Fullness of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1964), p. 8.

Christ. In I Corinthians 12:13 Paul declares all believers, even those living carnally after the flesh to be baptized in the Spirit. Paul does not ask believers to seek to be baptized in the Spirit here --he states it to be a present reality that all of them are already baptized in the Spirit. This baptism signifies that the believer is a part of the Body of Christ.

This means, significantly, that the purpose of the baptism in the Spirit is *not* the receiving of spiritual gifts, no matter how important or authentic they are, but that the primary function of the baptism is to place the believer into Christ which takes place at the beginning of the Christian experience. Dunn states, "The baptism in the Spirit . . . is not primarily to equip the (already) Christian for service; rather its function is to initiate the individual into the new age and covenant. . . ." <sup>44</sup> Hence, the baptism in the Spirit is a normative *initiative* experience which brings together the body of believers into Christ, as the Body of Christ. <sup>45</sup> As J. R. W. Stott states:

. . . Paul's teaching in I Corinthians 12:13 indicates that the 'gift' or 'baptism' of the Spirit, one of the *distinctive* blessings of the new covenant, is a *universal* blessing for members of the covenant, because it is an *initial* blessing. <sup>46</sup>

Thirdly, a consequence of the baptism in the Spirit is the equipping of the church with spiritual gifts which are evidences to the

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<sup>44</sup>Dunn, p. 32.

<sup>45</sup>Käseman, *Essays on New Testament Themes*, p. 113f., 118.

<sup>46</sup>Stott, p. 28.



reality of that baptism. Bultmann shows that through participation in the one Spirit one becomes a member of the one body and because of this participation one comes into fellowship in an eschatological event in which the Spirit and spiritual manifestations are given to build up that body.<sup>47</sup> The gifts, then, are responsible to the body and not the body to the gifts. It is clear then, that being baptized by the Spirit means to be equipped in such a way that the believer becomes not only an integral part in the functioning of the body but also becomes a sign to the reality of the ongoing process of the Spirit in the church and the world.

To reiterate, the baptism of the Spirit is a one-time experience which represents the initiation of a believer into the Body of Christ at the time of his conversion with the consequence that he is equipped with spiritual gifts to build up the community of believers.<sup>48</sup> It is to be remembered that the experience of the baptism of the Spirit is not an event in the life of only an individual person but is something experienced in the context of the larger community.<sup>49</sup>

Substantially, then, the baptism of the Spirit is an experience of being brought into the Body of Christ and into relationship to the presence and action of the Holy Spirit. This baptism is the turning point in one's spiritual life, and since people are at different levels when they reach it they may experience it differently. The differing

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<sup>47</sup>Bultmann, I, 155.

<sup>48</sup>Dunn, p. 32.

<sup>49</sup>Beasley-Murray, p. 170.

expressions of experiences testifies to the variety of people in the body. This variety is emphasized in verses 29-30 when Paul asks if all perform the same function in the body. Paul in using the rhetorical *mē* when asking if all have the same gift implies grammatically that the expected answer is "no."<sup>50</sup> It is at this point that Paul presents his discussion of the most important factor to be considered in defining and evaluating the place of the spiritual gifts in the life of the church.

#### D. PROBLEMS OF SYNTAX AND TRANSLATION IN I COR. 12:31

One faces several problems in considering verse 12:31 and the 13th chapter. The germinal thoughts for my consideration of the problems of these verses are found in Arnold Bittlinger's thought-provoking little work, *Gifts and Graces*.<sup>51</sup> First, there is the problem of the translation of 12:31. This verse is usually translated "(a) But earnestly *desire* the higher gifts. (a) And I will show you a still more excellent way" (KJV, RSV, Phillips, NEB). This translation is not without certain exegetical problems when translated in this way. Gerhard Iber<sup>52</sup> states in his research of this verse that it would seem unlikely that Paul would encourage the Corinthians to strive selfishly after the greatest gifts just after he had asked them to be content

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<sup>50</sup>H. E. Dana and J. R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (New York: Macmillan, 1927), p. 265.

<sup>51</sup>Bittlinger, p. 73f.

<sup>52</sup>Gerhard Iber as quoted in Bittlinger, p. 73.

with the gifts given them (12:15, 16). One of the problems Paul referred to was such coveting--everyone jealously desiring the so-called "better" or "greater" gifts. The verb *zēloute*, used in verse 31a can be translated in the indicative as well as the imperative mood<sup>53</sup> and therefore verse 31 could possibly be translated, "You are *striving* after the greatest gifts" (or at least the gifts they thought were the greatest). This translation seems to be supported by Paul's statement in verse 14:12 where he pictures the Corinthians as those who seek zealously after spiritual gifts. Yet, Paul is not forbidding them to seek spiritual gifts but is pointing out that there are two ways of seeking them. One is their way of jealously coveting spiritual gifts, and the other is the attaining and use of them through love. This explains the apparent contradiction of verse 12:12 where Paul says to be content with one's gift and verse 14:1 where he tells them to earnestly seek the spiritual gifts. Iber clarifies this situation when he writes:

There were certain things that Paul could not say before chapter 13 for they would have resulted then in a wrong tendency in the church. This could be restrained and restored to its proper perspective when the context and measure of the gifts, as dealt with in chapter 13, is taken into account. Only then could Paul dare to encourage the Corinthians to 'strive after spiritual gifts.'<sup>54</sup>

Verse 12:31b also poses a problem in translation. The *Aland-*

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<sup>53</sup>*The Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1961), p. 182.

<sup>54</sup>Iber, p. 74.

*Black-Metzger Greek New Testament*<sup>55</sup> which is based on the 25th edition of the *Nestle-Aland Greek Text* splits the versification of 12:31 in that 12:31a is versified in the concluding sentence of the last paragraph of chapter 12 while 12:31b is versified in the first sentence of the first paragraph of chapter 13. This structure lends a smoother transition between the two chapters and seems to support the view of chapter 13 as an integral element in Paul's thought rather than as an excursus between chapters 12 and 13, there by chance.<sup>56</sup> RSV has translated 12:31b "And I *will* show you a still more excellent way." The Western reading supplies *ei ti* "if anything" for *eti* "yet" or "still" and would be translated something like "If there is anything beyond this I am showing you a (the) way."<sup>57</sup> RSV, Phillips, and NEB commonly translate the verb *deiknumi* as "I *will* show" in the future tense. KJV translates "And yet shew I" or "I *am* showing" in the present tense as this is the tense of the verb. The verse would then be translated, "And yet I *am* showing you a more excellent way." The difference is subtle but the present tense is more in line with Paul's idea of showing love as the constant present factor in the proper understanding of spiritual gifts.

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<sup>55</sup>Bible, *The Greek New Testament* (London: United Bible Societies, 1966), I Cor. 12:31, p. 189.

<sup>56</sup>Oscar Cullman, *Early Christian Worship* (Chicago: Regnery, 1953), p. 189.

<sup>57</sup>F. F. Bruce, *I & II Corinthians* (London: Oliphants, 1971), p. 124.

E. I COR. 13 AND ITS PLACE IN THE DISCUSSION  
OF CHAPTERS 12 AND 14

Chapter 13 also presents some difficulties which must be faced. In a discussion of chapters 12 and 14 there are essentially three views concerning the part chapter 13 plays. The first is that which views chapter 13 as an independent composition of Paul's inserted in its present place by a later editor. Jean Héring comments:

. . . this chapter obviously interrupts the discussion on spiritual gifts. The two sentences added at the beginning and the end by an editor are in fact typical examples of editorial linkages . . . It is quite unrelated to chapters 12 and 14 . . . It could be argued therefore as certain that chapter 13 did not originally occupy its present place in the epistle. There is, however, no valid reason to doubt its Pauline origin.<sup>58</sup>

The second view, as espoused by Dr. Eric L. Titus, is that the chapter is not only out of place in its present position but also it is non-Pauline in authorship and is the work of a later, independent author and editor.<sup>59</sup> The indications of interpolation and insertion into its present position are the same as in the first view. This view differs from the former in its emphasis on the non-Pauline authorship of chapter 13. Titus bases this conclusion on several points. One is his observation that chapter 13 is not typical of regular Pauline parenthesis or digression.<sup>60</sup> Another reason is the

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<sup>58</sup>Héring, p. 134.

<sup>59</sup>Eric L. Titus, "Did Paul Write I Corinthians?" *Journal of Bible and Religion*, XXVII:4, (1959), 299.

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, 300.

notable absence of an explicit Christology as well as the sublimation of faith--which is the central key to Paul's theology--to love.<sup>61</sup> A final consideration of Titus' is that the form and high literary style of the chapter is different than is usually encountered in Paul.<sup>62</sup>

The third view, which is generally agreed upon by critical scholarship, is that the 13th chapter is an independent composition, most likely Pauline, and introduced at this point because of its relevance to the situation with which he was dealing.<sup>63</sup> While this view recognizes that the chapter at one time was not present in its current position and though the syntax and grammar are somewhat different in style from Paul,

It must be emphasized that this does not mean that the chapter was not written by Paul, or that it was not intended to stand at this place. It stands to the whole discussion of spiritual gifts. . . .<sup>64</sup>

Reiterating, these three views are: 1) Paul wrote chapter 13 independently from the rest of the letter and it was placed in its present position by a later editor, 2) Paul did not write chapter 13 and it was placed in its present place by an independent editor, and 3) Paul wrote chapter 13 independently from the rest of the letter but

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<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 301.

<sup>63</sup>C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 297; see also Moffatt, p. 191.

<sup>64</sup>Barrett, p. 299; see also John Coolidge Hurd, Jr., *The Origin of I Corinthians* (New York: Seabury Press, 1965), p. 192; and Grosheide, p. 303; and A. Robertson and A. Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1953), p. 285.

placed it himself in its present position because it reinforced his concern for the situation of the church at Corinth. We may eliminate the conclusion that recognition of its interpolated nature precludes Pauline authorship. As Titus says, " . . . Pauline authorship would not be disproved by a demonstration that the passage is out of context in its present position."<sup>65</sup> Thus, any determination of its authenticity is to be made independently of that consideration. However, if chapter 13 is Pauline, it would follow that it is likely (even though written independently) that he placed it in its present position to amplify or complete his line of thought in chapters 12 and 14. This writer, in studying this question, is inclined to side with the main body of critical scholarship which recognizes the Pauline authorship of chapter 13 and that Paul inserted it in its present position. Though Titus' arguments in his article are impressive, it does not appear that they are absolutely conclusive in relationship to such a short section or that they are generally accepted by the majority in critical scholarship (as Titus himself implies).<sup>66</sup> Hence, the conclusion of this writer is that chapter 13 is an independent composition of Paul's which he himself interpolated to its present position because of its applicability to the situation to which he was writing and stands centrally to his intention and discussion of spiritual gifts in chapters 12 and 14.

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<sup>65</sup>Titus, p. 299.

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*

F. RELATIONSHIP OF *CHARISMATA* TO *AGAPĒ*

One mistaken idea that should be cleared up is that which assumes *agapē* or love to be one of the gifts of the Spirit. The expression *charismata* is never used in the New Testament to describe love.<sup>67</sup> Love is not a spiritual gift at all because it is on a level far above all the spiritual gifts. According to Paul in Galatians 5:22f. love is one of the fruits of the Spirit, so important that it might be considered *the* fruit of the Spirit. It is significant that Paul uses the singular "fruit" rather than the plural, because the latter would suggest a group of varied and independent elements rather than his aim to show various aspects of a single reality.<sup>68</sup> Paul, rather, calls love "a way" (12:31). Love, then, is not one of the spiritual gifts needed to build up the community, it is the very essence of the Body of Christ itself--it is the way in which every Christian must walk regardless of the gift he possesses. Love is the indispensable element without which all the gifts, even when combined, are misdirected in their expression.

The essential difference between the gifts of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit is that while the gifts may not necessarily be present in the same degree and extent with every believer, the fruit of the Spirit should be expressed in the life of all believers without

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<sup>67</sup>Bittlinger, p. 74.

<sup>68</sup>Ernest De Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1968), p. 313.



exception. Not all believers have the same or the greatest gifts, but whether they do or not (and even more so if they do), the expression of the fruit of the Spirit in love is the crucial factor. In other words, the measure of the believer's sanctification is not found in the spiritual gifts he may have, but the fruit of the Spirit which he manifests in his life. Thus, while there is a correspondence between sanctification and the fruit of the Spirit there is no such relationship in regard to the possession of the spiritual gifts.<sup>69</sup> Hence, the fruit of the Spirit makes the difference as to the way or the effectiveness by which a believer uses his gifts, but it does not determine which gifts he might have. There is, however, a negative relationship between sanctification and the gifts of the Spirit. The Christian who does not have the fruit of the Spirit which is love will show a similar proportion of lack of discernment and ability to use the spiritual gifts properly in the context of the community. This was exactly the problem in the Corinthian Church--they gauged a person's spirituality by the manifestation of the gifts he had rather than by the love which was to be expressed through those gifts.

Love then is an absolute standard for the believer while the spiritual gifts are relative to its predominant position. But this is not to say that love is an alternative to the gifts. Verse 14:1 admonishes the Corinthians to seek both love *and* gifts. Love becomes the principle of applying and exercising the gifts and the gifts when

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<sup>69</sup>Peter C. Wagner, *A Turned-on Church in an Uptight World* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), p. 98.

so directed by love become the means of the practical and concrete expression of the love of Christ. But the gifts without love are nothing for the greatest display of gifts cannot come close to compensating for lack of love (13:1-3). Paul is not demanding that one must choose between love and gifts, but only that one allows love to be the predominate element in the exercising of the spiritual gifts he may possess.

The aim so far in this chapter has been to assess the meaning of spiritual gifts and their significance in a positive way as much as possible without bringing into consideration the ways the gifts were abused in Corinth. This was done in order to see clearly the significance of the content-meaning of the spiritual gifts without regard to the form of their use. As one looks more deeply into the 13th chapter this becomes harder to do because Paul begins to apply his teaching to the abuse in a more specific way than he had previously.

#### 1. Abusive Tendencies in the Use of *Charismata*

At this point, then, the abuses of the gifts will be considered in relationship to the norm of spiritual life which Paul calls for in Chapter 13. The circumstances in which the gifts were given to the community contributed in a particular way to an atmosphere of abuse. Corinth was a cosmopolitan city consisting of all types of people which would have made the church very diversified in structure. It would be unavoidable that abuses would arise with those who carried over pagan ideas and religious forms; that those of higher class would

look down on those of lower class; that those of lower class would envy those of higher class; that those more used to ecstatic worship would interpret Christian worship in the same way as in pagan rituals, and that in public worship confusion and division could occur due to the numbers of people wanting to exercise their gift at the same time. It is to these abuses that Paul addressed himself.

Paul in 13:4b-5a defines love by listing five negative adjectives which show the dangers a believer faces in himself in regard to spiritual gifts. These dangers were jealousy and boasting, arrogance and rudeness, and insisting on one's own way. Though, as has been already determined, the 13th chapter is an independent composition of Paul's, it should not be concluded for that reason that one cannot make application of its content to the context of the Corinthian situation in chapters 12 and 14. Since, as has been previously stated, Paul inserted chapter 13 at its present position because it applied to the situation he was addressing. For that reason, one may infer that chapter 13 was meant by Paul to be applied to the situation of chapters 12 and 14. Indeed, the applicability of the content of chapter 13 to the context of chapters 12 and 14 is so close that it seems, " . . . almost every word of the chapter has been chosen with this particular situation at Corinth in mind,"<sup>70</sup> and had not it already lain at hand, Paul would have composed something along its lines to complete his

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<sup>70</sup> Clarence Tucker Craig, "Exegesis of I Corinthians," in *The Interpreters Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1953), X, 165; see also Bruce, p. 124.

idea. Thus, the content of chapter 13 which deals with the way spiritual gifts are used and their relationship to love lends itself specifically to the situation in chapters 12 and 14 as well as generally to the scope of the whole letter.

The dangers may be grouped and defined as: (1) Jealousy and boasting--this jealousy and boasting found form in what Paul had been speaking against since the first chapter of I Corinthians, party factions. These Corinthians rallied around one teacher and his ideas, those Corinthians around another teacher and his ideas. Each group had their minds set on presenting their own particular ideas and leaders as the standard for the whole community. As one group looked at the other and felt they did not possess the best gifts, they became envious of others and jealously coveted the spiritual gifts they did not themselves possess without considering whether or not the gifts they so coveted were the ones God intended for them. They regarded the possession of the gifts in egoistic pride and set believers against each other on the basis of the possession of this or that gift. This created a twofold division in the church--those who had the gifts and felt superior, and those who did not have the gifts and felt inferior. But just as bad as those who were jealous and envied others gifts were those who boasted about the gifts they possessed. When such extraordinary gifts are manifested the abuse is ready at hand that there will be those who want to display their knowledge, or their prophecy, or their gift of tongues. Not only do they boast instead of manifesting love they also attribute their gifts to themselves and

not to God. Pride of gifts became a definite stumbling block in the lives of many of the Corinthians. The people were looking for any occasion in which they could display their particular gift, no matter whether such display built up the fellowship or hurt it. (2) Arrogance and rudeness--although the early church experienced a freedom from formal styles of worship, this same freedom was subject to the abuses of those carried away with their experiences and the resulting disorderliness.<sup>71</sup> But the important point here is not the fact that Paul was speaking against the experience *per se*, but that he was saying that the experience must be tempered with love. Not only did such actions bring confusion but they also brought about un-Christian conduct as well. Certain forms of order in worship were being disregarded through self-assertiveness by those who claimed special gifts and guidance by the Spirit. Paul was showing that love predicates subjection of the individual to the authority of the body when one comes under the power of the Spirit.

In summary of these dangers to the individual, Paul writes, "Love does not insist on its own way." The arrogant, boastful, and rude individuals of the community were revealing a non-loving and egoistic attitude. These people were insisting on having their own way, and such self-assertiveness was bound to disturb the unity of the body. Paul saw that insisting on one's own individual way without regard to the body was against the demand of love. Bruner comments:

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<sup>71</sup>Craig, p. 177.

It is sufficient now to observe that Christian love has as the goal of its seeking something other than its own advancement. This again brings the thirteenth chapter into harmony with the twelfth where we observe the *diakonia* and 'common good' character and direction of the graces in Paul's definition. Graces too, like their *modus vivendi* love, 'do not seek their own.' They exist for the service of the body into which they have been baptized.<sup>72</sup>

Paul continues in verses 5b-7 to clarify the meaning of love to those who have felt wronged by the type of abuses he lists in 4b-5a. Here, as in the entirety of chapters 12-14 Paul emphasizes the importance of the body. Not only are those who have abused the body by their misuse of spiritual gifts to be under the law of love but also those to whom these abuses have been dealt. Paul saw that if the body is to be one, love must be a two-way street and that the body could be destroyed as easily from resentment fostered by abuses of the spiritual gifts as by the abuses themselves. Thus, resentment, irritation, and rejoicing in the mistakes which result from the wrong use of the gifts by others is not consistent with the building up of the body.

From here, Paul changes midverse and examines positively how love expresses itself in the body, "But (it) rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." Love is so central to the Christian's character that it will not expose viciously the unworthy actions or wrong use of the gifts by other believers. Paul knew that actions which may often seem abusive of the gifts do not always stem from conscious intention

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<sup>72</sup>Bruner, p. 296.

but can come from spiritual ignorance (12:1). Love will compensate for such lack of knowledge and bring understanding so that avenues of correction will be open and that the Body of Christ can move as one to correct abuses. This is the way of love which Paul maintains is necessary for the Body of Christ to be one.

## 2. Superiority of *Agapē*

In verses 8-13 Paul stresses three things about *agapē* or love. William Barclay says these are its "absolute permanency, completeness, and supremacy."<sup>73</sup> Contrasting the gifts to love in these verses brings out clearly the absoluteness of love and the relativeness of the gifts. In contrast to everything which is temporary, one thing alone remains--love. The gifts of the Spirit may pass away but the fruit of the Spirit will remain. Paul was attempting to show the Corinthians that the gifts to which they were attaching so much importance were not the primary function of a Christian's character. The outward form of the gifts were transitory--the content and substance of them, which was love, was eternal.

Having made this point, though, it should not be understood that Paul felt the outward character of the gifts had no place in the expression of the fruit of the Spirit. Knowledge, even though it was not complete, and prophecy, even though it was not perfect, and tongues, even though they were not entire without an interpreter, were

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<sup>73</sup>William Barclay, *The Letter to the Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956), pp. 130-40.

not to be disregarded and unused. It would only be when the perfect comes that the imperfect would pass away and until then the imperfect must be retained. Otherwise, the line of reasoning in chapter 14 would make no sense if Paul were instructing the Corinthians how to properly use gifts which were no longer in existence. As F. F. Bruce comments, the relationship of the imperfect and the perfect is the recognition of the division of the present age and the age to come which is realized in the parousia of Christ.

The Spirit is the pledge of the eternal heritage into which believers will enter at resurrection and his gifts belong to the present, anticipatory stage of his ministry: they are *imperfect* in comparison with the coming perfection.<sup>74</sup>

Thus, there is a definite tension between the imperfect and the perfect. The gifts and their imperfection are a constant reminder that the perfect, which is Christ, is still yet to come. As Oscar Cullmann states, though "we are already seized by the Spirit . . . we are waiting still."<sup>75</sup> The church though it has the Spirit is still waiting for the perfect to come and as Cullmann again says, "The apostle does not forget for a moment that sin still prevails in the church created and possessed by the Spirit."<sup>76</sup> This state of imperfection shows that Christ has not yet come to bring perfection again to his creation. Until the time that the perfect comes, the church

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<sup>74</sup>Bruce, p. 128.

<sup>75</sup>Oscar Cullmann, *Salvation in History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 256.

<sup>76</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 257.



will have to use the forms of the imperfect (gifts) to accomplish the building up of the body.

This brings out another important aspect of the gifts. As Paul goes on to say, the spiritual realities one experiences now are imperfect at best. The gifts and the experiences related with them are limited by the nature of one's human existence. As Paul said, "We see through a mirror dimly." One may glimpse divine reality in the gifts but this is perceived only dimly as compared with how it will be when each believer comes face to face with God (vs. 12). The gifts, as this shows, can never be seen as substitutes for the central reality of Christ. The face to face vision of God must wait until the time comes that we shall "Know fully even as we have been fully understood" (vs. 13:13). The significance of the gifts, then, serve only as *signs* to the presence of the Spirit and the coming of the Lord rather than a face to face encounter or vision of God.

Though imperfect, the gifts (when manifested in love), offer direction and guidance and a means by which the church moves forward in proclaiming its word and building its faith and body. As Grosheide comments,

I Corinthians 13 occupies a most important place in the discourse on the charismata. It furnishes the foundation both for a warning against overestimating glossolalia and for a summons to use the gift rightly . . . furthermore, we are informed that the charismata belong to this dispensation, love to the future one. . . .<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Grosheide, p. 314; however, see Moffat, p. 200; and Robertson-Plummer, p. 295f., who emphasize correctly in relationship to love and gifts that love is both for time *and* eternity, while gifts are only realized in time.

Even the imperfect puts meaning and coherence into the life and history of the church if it is used properly. It is not to be disregarded. True, Paul is putting love above the gifts (the more excellent way), but he is not replacing the gifts by love. Love only conditions the gifts, it does not replace them. That is, though one speaks with tongues, has the gift of prophecy, or has absolute faith, *if* (conditional) one does not have love, then and only then, is the gift to be seen as antithetical to love. But if love is present, then all of the gifts mentioned in chapter 13 take on new meaning. Instead of being seen as something to be disregarded, they are seen as something which enriches and may become a means for expressing love in the present time.

Lest one forget even a moment, Paul ends the 13th chapter by saying again that love is the greatest and most needed element in the church's character.

We can celebrate a faith, though aware of its imperfection, which holds within it the inspiration of the highest service and the promise of a fullness of life and knowledge and love to come. . . .<sup>78</sup>

Love is Paul's criterion of value of all that the Christian may do, and in the measure of this supreme value all the gifts of the Spirit have a relative and lesser position. Love is the way by which every member can have a part as it is not held back from anyone who seeks it. The value of love is that even when that which is perfect comes, love will remain. Love is the anticipation of the perfect and

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<sup>78</sup>Craig, p. 193.

therein lies its greatness. Hence, it may be realized that,

Given the true spirit of love the community will at least approximate what it should be as the 'Body of Christ' on earth; and other spiritual gifts, distributed as they may be among the various members, will in turn make their contribution to the spiritual welfare of all.<sup>79</sup>

## G. THE STRUCTURE OF CHARISMATIC EXPERIENCE

### IN I COR. 14

Chapter 14 marks the beginning of Paul's consideration of the structure which charismatic experience must take. This chapter is of extreme importance not only because of its relevance to the course of Paul's thought but also because it is the only text in the New Testament that takes a position with respect to Christian worship.<sup>80</sup>

One is aware that the early church was extremely fluid in its form and function with no definite or deliberate effort to fix a specific style or structure to its religious experience. By the Spirit the offices and functions of the body could be modified to meet changing situations. Yet, the church at Corinth was certainly having difficulty correlating the content of its charismatic experience to the outward manifestation of it.

Paul must have acutely felt the tension between allowing the freedom of the Spirit and yet giving instructions about how this experience was to be structured in the context of the life of the

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<sup>79</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 194.

<sup>80</sup>Ferdinand Hahn, *The Worship of the Early Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 68.

church and worship. As Bultmann states one must be clear on "the difference between the Ecclesia as an historical phenomenon and the Ecclesia as the eschatological Congregation guided by the Spirit's sway, which it understands itself to be."<sup>81</sup> The Ecclesia understands itself differently than just an historical phenomenon. Rather, it sees itself as a common community of those guided by the Spirit.<sup>82</sup> To mistake then, the structure of the community with this central content of its being is to destroy the vitality of the Spirit's moving. As John L. McKenzie, S.J., comments, such a mistake of structure for content does not so much "encroach upon the actions of men, but upon the action of the Spirit within the Church."<sup>83</sup>

And yet, realizing this, Paul moves to create a structure to define and guide the content of the charismatic experience. This structuring of the experience is intimately related to his concept of the church as the Body of Christ. The question of what form the rule of the Spirit will be realized in the congregation finds its answer in this concept. As Bultmann again says, " . . . notwithstanding the authority of the Spirit-endowed--for this is not an authority of office--the congregation takes action as a totality."<sup>84</sup> Freedom in the Spirit must be governed by responsibility to the body. The

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<sup>81</sup>Bultmann, II, 96.

<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup>John L. McKenzie, *Authority in the Church* (Garden City: Image, 1971), p. 97.

<sup>84</sup>Bultmann, II, 99.

question of structure is then determined by the body which recognizes itself as the Body of Christ, guided by the Spirit. When this is understood, the regulative structure which Paul expresses does not stand in opposition to the moving of the Spirit but may actually be seen to be the creation of the Spirit. Bultmann again says,

. . . It is not justified to place the inception and development of church order and church office in opposition to the sway of the Spirit . . . Intelligent conduct which arises from a recognition of what the situation demands does not exclude the possibility that the Spirit is working in such conduct.<sup>85</sup>

The structure, however, in itself is not a sacred entity by itself. Rather, the content--which is the reality of the Spirit's moving--is sacred. This is not to say that the Spirit is without structure. It is to say, however, that no one structure can at all times and in all places be assumed to be the universal form in which the Holy Spirit *must* be realized. That is, the Spirit at all times is expressed in structure, but is not structured in the same way at all times.

In the past, structures in the church which have made meaningful the content of a religious experience have been taken over in a somewhat permanent way. These structures, however, have become static and the original content-significance lost when the dynamic of the Spirit's moving was assumed to be in the structure rather than in the meaning of the content which expressed its significance through the structure. One finds that in the New Testament the structures are

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<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

more free, with the purpose of the church presented and the means to achieve that purpose. The application of the means was left basically with the church as it was guided by the Spirit in a particular situation.

This then, was the tension with which Paul found himself faced as he wrote chapter 14--the freedom of the Spirit as well as regulation of the Spirit.

### 1. *Oikodome*

Verse 3 of chapter 14 sets the purpose of the chapter and restates the central aim of the spiritual gifts in the church--*oikodome* (occurring also in verses 3, 4, 5, 12, 17 and 26). *Oikodome* (edification) is derived from *oikos* (house) and *domeo* (to build) which literally means "the building of a house" and reflects Paul's concept which places the individual into the larger context of the community.<sup>86</sup> The term corresponds to the congregations process of growth, but this is to be understood in terms of Christ and the Spirit.<sup>87</sup> Oscar Cullmann observes:

The occasions (of worship) serve for the 'building up' of the community as the *Body of Christ*, the spiritual body of the risen Lord. The church as the body of this Christ must take shape in the gatherings of the community. The church is built up in virtue of its coming together.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>Michel, "οἰκοδομεῖν . . ." in Kittel, V, 140ff.

<sup>87</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>88</sup>Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship*, p. 33.

Thus, only that which so furthers this sense of *oikodome* is to be expressed in the service of worship.

Relevant to this, Bornkamm comments,

The concept of 'edification' as *nomen actionis* would of course, be misunderstood if one were to infer from it that Paul subjected the congregation to the ideal distant goal of becoming God's temple some day through the common effort of the Apostles and charismatics.<sup>89</sup>

The assembly *is* the Body of Christ now and is not to be so at some distant time in the future. Thus, edification of the church is not something to be looked forward to in the future. It occurs in the present moment of worship as a body in Christ. What makes the service a real act of worship is the present action of the Holy Spirit--the *arrabōn* or down payment of the consummation. The eschatological character of the assembled body is seen in this present action of the Holy Spirit. Herein lies the reason for the importance of allowing the free working of the Spirit. It is in the community gathered for worship that the Holy Spirit is experientially known and is made manifest. Without the operation of the Spirit, Christian worship would be merely a human act. As Cullmann states:

It is not as though in all this only man as such acted. The assembled community is much more the organ which Christ employs in order to show forth his body as the Church. For this reason special gifts of the Spirit are required in the performance of those various elements of worship and the gathering for worship is in reality a gift of God to men.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup>Günther Bornkamm, *Early Christian Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 164.

<sup>90</sup>Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship*, p. 34.

Thus, it is through the Spirit that the community is built up as the Body of Christ and this through the gifts which are bestowed. Hence, the expressions of the Spirit's presence seen in the spiritual gifts are to be considered used rightly only when they work toward the present moment in the building and edification of the church.

The aim of Paul's instruction was to develop within the Corinthians a sense of discrimination between that which was human reaction to the Spirit and that which was the pure manifestation of the Holy Spirit through human agency. The degree to which human reaction could be controlled in the spiritual atmosphere would determine the effectiveness of the pure manifestation of the Spirit.<sup>91</sup>

Paul saw that the most effective way of so determining the effectiveness of the Spirit's moving in the congregation at worship was his injunction that all be done unto edification. Thus, any reaction that did not achieve this purpose, that brought confusion, contradiction, or schism and was not to be expressed in the public assembly at worship.

Paul went on to relate the meaning and function of two of the gifts; speaking in tongues and prophecy. As it is not the intention of this paper to give a descriptive analysis of any of the spiritual gifts, Paul's teaching at this point will only be considered in a general way. Since what is of concern here is the relationship of the content of the experience to its structure it will be seen that what is true in relationship to the two gifts mentioned is also true in relation to all the gifts, and thus Paul's teaching will be applied in this way.

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<sup>91</sup>D. R. Guynes, "Human Reaction and Spiritual Manifestation," *Paraclete*, IV:2 (Spring 1970), 28.



Verse 12 clearly shows that there was dispute and confusion within the Corinthian church over the relative importance of the gifts. This lack of understanding had led to a zealous seeking after gifts which were thought to be on a higher level than other so-called "lesser" gifts. To Paul it was unbecoming and childlike for the Corinthians to seek spiritual gifts only for their own personal upbuilding.

The gifts were given for a larger purpose than just the individual. In verse 3 Paul, although speaking of prophecy, is giving guidelines for all the gifts and their evaluation and stresses again the aim of the gifts. Their aim must be to 1) build (*oikodome*), 2) encourage or exhort (*paraklesis*), and 3) be of comfort (*paramuthuia*). These specific ends of the gifts seek to accomplish the main aim of edifying or building up the body. All that is done must be done for all. The test of the spiritual authenticity of any act expressed in the congregation is, "Will it help everyone?" not "Will it show off my own personal gift?" The individual is built up through the functioning of the other members of the community. The ministries and the gifts of the Spirit are given so that the *entire* body can experience the blessing of Christ as the community grows in faith. In the gifts of the Spirit, Christ is actively present; thus, believers will be built up, unbelievers will be confronted with the presence of Christ, and both will be convicted of sin (verse 25). If the purpose of the meeting of worship is not realized in the edification of the whole body the gifts being exercised are to be seen as being used in a wrong way (not withstanding their inherent authenticity).

## 2. Paul's Instructions

It is at this point that Paul introduces special instructions by which the aim of edifying the body may be effected. Paul, in wanting to avoid a fanatical adherence to form, which would quench the Spirit, expresses in verse 26 that the true form of worship comes through the community as each member contributes something to the whole. One person should not be expected to be the center of the worship meeting, but rather, all should come prepared to share their gift with the body, realizing that what he shares is not his own alone but a gift of the Spirit to the entire body. Thus, each member was free to make his own contribution to the worship as he felt moved by the Spirit. But having said this, Paul turns to the danger of fanatic adherence to no form with people simply doing what they felt the Spirit was telling them to do on the spur of the moment.

The first principle Paul introduced which would structure the exercise and form of the gifts was, "All things should be done decently and in order" (verse 40). Paul is clear when he states that "God is not a God of disorder but of peace" (verse 33). God himself is not characterized by, and is therefore not the cause of, disorder. If disorder appears, Paul makes it clear that no one can claim that it is the Will of God.

The other regulations proceed from this foundation of peace and order. These are: 1) When someone speaks it is to be in turns, one by one, and limited to a few. Paul is stating here that charismatic interruptions are not to be so numerous as to displace other

functions which were part of the worship service, i.e., exposition and reading of the word, etc. R. P. Martin shows that the Corinthians' worship consisted of three basic components in its community: the charismatic element, the didactic, and the eucharistic.<sup>92</sup> Whenever the church emphasized too much of any one particular element it became imbalanced and the body as a whole was not served. The body could only be built up as each element in its worship was emphasized in a healthy balance. Paul was concerned here with those members who, carried away by the moving of the Spirit, would talk simultaneously with the result that what they said would be unintelligible. This was closely connected with the regulation that 2) all that is spoken in the assembly of worship must be able to be understood. This is in relationship to tongues but could also apply in the case of two or three prophecy where none could be understood because of the others all speaking at the same time. 3) All that is said should be held accountable to the entire body to be evaluated for its validity before it was considered to be from the Lord. 4) If someone in the congregation has the conviction that he has a gift to share with the body, the man who has the floor must give him the opportunity to share it. No one could plead that he was under divine impulse and could not step down for "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets" (verse 32). This statement shows that the gifts are under control of the one exercising them and should not be given over to uncontrolled self-ecstasy. That is, if the exercising of a particular gift would

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<sup>92</sup>Martin, pp. 132-33.

violate any of the prescribed restrictions, then the individual should restrain himself. Also, this may certainly be seen as a place where spiritual gifts are seen to be interdependent. The gift of prophecy and the gift of discernment of spirits come together in a cross check of each other which is controlled and authenticated by the entire body. If the one speaking truly has a gift to share with the congregation it will be exercised according to these regulations in love. In this way all have the opportunity to be heard and all members of the church are benefited. Through such regulations freedom is allowed but disorder and confusion is eliminated.

It is plain to see that for Paul the spiritual gifts are to be regulated in the context of the community with the *primary goal* of building up the body as a unity in Christ. The gifts are only being exercised in a proper way when their structure is consistent with their content-significance which is a careful balance between freedom in the Spirit and regulation. Oscar Cullmann has expressed so capably this idea that he is here quoted at length:

It is the strength of the earlier service of worship that here free working of the Spirit and liturgical restrictiveness still go hand in hand and together serve the one end, the 'building up' of the community. Admittedly there were dangers from the beginning; on the one hand of extinguishing the fire of prophecy, on the other hand of indulging in it uncritically. There was need for a strong sense of moderation and order, such as Paul possessed in a preeminent way, in order to unify such diverse elements as speaking with tongues and prophecy on one side and the fixed acts and forms of liturgy on the other. Paul was able to bring freedom of the Spirit and the restrictions of liturgy together in the selfsame service because he saw everything in the light of the one aim; the *oikodome* . . . it is precisely

in this *harmonious combination of freedom and restriction* that there lies the greatness and uniqueness of the early Christian service of worship.<sup>93</sup>

The significance of the spiritual gifts are seen in their content-meaning as gifts of grace from God and their structure is determined and formed by that content as each believer with a gift exercises it for two purposes: 1) for the use of the common good (*pros to sumpheron*; 12:7) and 2) for the edifying or building up of the church (*pros oikodomen*; 14:26). "The worship of the Corinthian church took place, not in arbitrary indiscrimination, but an interior principle which could not have been carried out without a certain exterior structure."<sup>94</sup> It is only when the structure of the charismatic experience meets this twofold content function through love that the structure and content become one in a single, unified Body of Christ.

Lest Paul be misunderstood at this point it should be emphasized that when he indicates that edification is the goal of the gifts he does not mean that only in the sense of the church developing a mystical form as the Body of Christ, but also:

In Corinthian worship he (Paul) sees the reality of Christ fashioning the whole life of the church in its members in faith, hope, and love. Thus there issues from the operations of the Spirit an effect on the *whole* life of the Christian, they are not confined to activity in worship but in their mighty power they flow through every channel of life.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup>Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>94</sup>Gerhard Delling, *Worship in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), p. 34.

<sup>95</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 40.

## H. CONCLUSIONS

In concluding this chapter on the biblical perspective of the charismatic experience and spiritual gifts as found in I Corinthians 12-14 one arrives at some definite conclusions as to what it does and does not comprise. First, however, it must be seen that edification or the building up of the body through love is the primary criterion by which the charismatic experience and spiritual gifts are to be judged. It is from this primary criterion that the following conclusions as to what the experience should and should not comprise are based. Propositionally these may be stated:

1) The charismatic experience does not authenticate zealous factionalism or elite-type positions to individuals within the Body of Christ.

2) The charismatic experience recognizes that before God there are no distinctions of sex, social status, or race.

3) It precludes any tendency for individual members of the body to pass judgment on the gifts of one another except in the context of the entire community.

4) It allows no jealous coveting of spiritual gifts which one thinks best, but the seeking of those gifts which God would give one to serve the body.

5) It precludes any ostentatious display of gifts.

6) It finds expression through a variety of spiritual gifts which are bestowed by the Holy Spirit.

7) There appears to be no complete catalogue of the gifts in

the New Testament, but rather the Spirit bestows those gifts which will most readily meet the needs of the individual and the community in changing situations.

8) It is neither a personally self-evaluating or a self-interpreting experience. Its authenticity must be tested under the authority and interpretation of the entire body.

9) Charismatic experience is to be ordered in regard to numbers exercising gifts, their application to the body, and coherency of outward meaning and form.

10) It is liable to abuse and can be the cause of division and schism if its structure is not aligned with its content-significance, and therefore:

11) The use of the charismatic gifts must be regulated and evaluated by their effects upon the individual who exercises them and their effect on the upbuilding or edification of the total body.

12) One of the tests of the validity of any charismatic gift or experience is that it points to Christ and not to the individual.

13) The charismatic experience is ultimately tested and judged by its compliance to the law of love which regulates and limits the experience in the context of Christian worship and whose goal is the edification of the body. Love, then, furnishes the norm for the evaluation of the gifts and their proper exercise in the body. As C. K. Barrett states, ". . . Love provides the scale by which other gifts may be tested and measured, and also is the means by which the

unity of the body is maintained."<sup>96</sup>

These definitions of the structure of the experience are derived from the basic content-meaning of the gifts themselves. Propositionally, the significance of the gifts are:

1) Given through the grace of God to equip believers for ministry and service.

2) The means whereby the church is edified or built up as a total body.

3) The visible and vital signs to the community that its members share the Spirit of Christ.

4) The means for the expression of the love of believer to believer in the Spirit of Christ.

The dimension through which the Christian experiences the gifts is the "baptism with the Holy Spirit" which may be seen as:

1) That act which signifies an initiatory, once-for-all experience which every Christian comes into at the beginning of his Christian life and which brings that person into the Body of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

2) That it seems to be accompanied by no one particular or singular spiritual gift which testifies to its reality in fact (though any particular spiritual gift in an individual may so testify).

3) The baptism is not stated as something which the believer in Christ is told to seek, but rather, it is presented as a fact which happens to believers who are "in Christ."

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<sup>96</sup>Barrett, p. 297.



### CHAPTER III

#### AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON CHARISMATIC EXPERIENCE IN THE CHURCH

This chapter will attempt to deal historically with the way Christians have experienced the Holy Spirit in history through the church, and the mode of expression in which that experience has manifested itself. This will entail an historical study of movements which contained elements of charismatic experience and their effect upon the church as a unity as the Body of Christ.

The relation of the Holy Spirit and the expression in experience of spiritual realities has been a vital concern to the church through the centuries. This historical concern, as has been expressed in the first chapter, is vital to the understanding of the present-day discussion of the charismatic movement. The questions asked today of spiritual experience and the Holy Spirit may be shown to be similar and related, even if not identical, to questions asked by the church in previous generations. Many of the characteristics of many of the modern-day charismatics have close parallels in the history of the church. While these questions may never be quite the same, yet, they strike so close in their expression throughout the history of the church that they may be seen as a reliable means of formulating an evaluation of the present movement in terms of how these experiences have been expressed in that history.

The purpose of this historical study is not to condemn out-of-hand those movements which brought division to the church but to take a look at the structure of their experience and to make an evaluation of them in the light of its effects on the unity of the church and thereby to attempt to offer guidelines to prevent the divisiveness which occurred in them to reappear and to see which forms of historical experience are most responsive to the unity of faith in diversity of experience. It will be seen that many of the problems (anticipatory, as well as actual) encountered in the present-day charismatic movement have characteristically taken similar forms in the history of the church. The history of the church can, therefore, be representatively studied as a source of evaluating in retrospect problems of like kind which have or may appear in the church today. An attempt will also be made to show that the present neo-Pentecostal movement has structured a theological position which is the result not of a biblical and theological basis, but rather, the evolution of certain historical, cultural, and existential factors.

Due to the vastness of the scope which one would necessarily have to cover in such a study, certain delimitations need to be put forth. Firstly, it will not be the purpose of this chapter to go into a detailed historical study of the background of the different movements examined. The concern here is not necessarily why or how such movements came into existence. Rather, once they did, how did they structure the experience of their encounter with God through the Holy Spirit? However, if and when such background material would

throw light on the reasons for the formation of certain structures of experience, such material will be considered. Secondly, it is obvious that the study of such movements of the Spirit in the history of the church must be a *representative* one. It would be impossible for the purposes of this study to attempt to cover anything but a representative selection of such movements.

The procedure for the selection of the movements included here was based on this need for a representative study. Montanism was chosen because of its ancient origin and that it was the first of such movements to arise within the church. Jansenism was included because it arose within the Catholic Church rather than the Protestant Church and thus serves as a reminder that such movements and their effects do not necessarily arise only in a Protestant setting (as the contemporary movements show us), but can appear in a highly ecclesiastical setting. Pietism, Moravianism, and Methodism were included because of their common interdependence of culture, historical proximity, and religious thought patterns which stressed experience, all of which would provide the informative influence for the rise of later Pentecostalism. The Holiness-Pentecostal movements were included because of the obvious importance of their impact not only in doctrine, but also terminology, methodology, and application of their teachings on the current neo-Pentecostal movement. All of these movements were included because they best served the intention and method of approaching the entire problem of charismatic experience from a form-content analysis. Other movements such as the Irvingites or the Waldenses,

which could have also been included, were not, because their historical situations and structures of experience were so close to already discussed movements that they would be redundant. The procedure for the selection of the included movements was also based upon the intention to cover several different time periods, historical situations, and structures of experience in order to have a general feeling for the way such movements have expressed their encounter with God throughout the history of the church.

That the historical study of these movements within the church is essential has been voiced by Henry P. Van Dusen, who said:

Examination of the relation of the Holy Spirit to the church brings us at once to the heart of issues which most grievously divide Christians, preventing whatever degree and form of union may be recognized as God's intention for Christ's Church.<sup>1</sup>

### MONTANISM

In Montanism in the second century, we find many of the same problems which Paul encountered in the Corinthian Church reappearing in an acute form. The early history of the movement has been preserved through the writings of Eusebius.<sup>2</sup> The movement appeared quite soon after the middle of the second century in Phrygia in Asia Minor but did not attract general attention until after 175 A.D. when it became a popular movement and spread widely with outreaches into Rome, Gaul,

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<sup>1</sup>Henry P. Van Dusen, *Spirit, Son and Father* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 122.

<sup>2</sup>Eusebius, "Church History," V.16 in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), I.

and North Africa.<sup>3</sup>

Montanus, the movement's founder, was a convert to Christianity and was basically orthodox. He opposed infant baptism and gnosticism and held to the doctrine of the trinity, the universal priesthood, and asceticism.<sup>4</sup> The Montanists represented a revival of the prophets who were prominent in the early years of the church. They believed in an early end of the world, the second coming of Christ, and the establishment of the ideal society in the New Jerusalem. They prized the teachings of Christ and the Apostles and stressed a high standard of moral living among Christian communities into which they believed spiritual laxity was beginning to appear.<sup>5</sup>

Montanism received its ablest defense in the personage of Tertullian, without whose writings we would know little of the movement. Converted in middle age, he joined the movement and became a presbyter in Carthage where he spent most of his time as an apologist for the movement. His writings have probably protected the movement from some of the grosser accusations brought against it. For Tertullian the interest of Montanism lay in:

The assurance which the new prophecy seemed to give that the Holy Spirit was still teaching in the church. He is careful to insist that though the movement was a new one,

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<sup>3</sup>Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Harper & Row, 1953), p. 128.

<sup>4</sup>Robert Glenn Gromacki, *The Modern Tongues Movement* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1967), p. 13.

<sup>5</sup>Latourette, p. 129.

the Spirit was none other than the Paraclete who had been promised and already sent; and that his teaching through the Montanist prophets was not essentially new.<sup>6</sup>

That Tertullian believed in the continued experience of spiritual gifts is seen in his statement, "Seeing that we acknowledge spiritual *charismata*, or gifts, we too have merited the attainment of the prophetic gift . . ."<sup>7</sup> He then describes a woman who had experienced a number of spiritual gifts. In his treatise against Marcion, he says:

Let Marcion then exhibit, as gifts of his god, some prophets, such as have not spoken by human sense, but with the Spirit of God . . . Now all these signs (of spiritual gifts) are forthcoming from my side without any difficulty, and they agree, too, with the rules, and the dispensations, and the instructions of the Creator; therefore without doubt the Christ, and the Spirit, and the apostle, belong severally to my God.<sup>8</sup>

In its basic concern Montanism was no different than many of the other renewal movements of the church. It sought a return to godly ways of living, purity in worship, and a return to a more direct encounter with God. All these are worthy goals to be sought by one who is pursuing the Christian life. And yet, in examining the structure of the Montanist's experience one finds a disharmony with the biblical meaning of spiritual realities as outlined in Chapter II.

The particular experience that became the focal point for the

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<sup>6</sup>H. B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church* (London: Macmillan, 1912), p. 79.

<sup>7</sup>Tertullian, "A Treatise on the Soul," IX, 188 in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), III.

<sup>8</sup>Tertullian, "Against Marcion," VIII, 477 in *Ibid.*, III.

entire movement was that of prophecy. At his baptism, Montanus:

'Spoke with tongues' and began prophesying, declaring that the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, promised . . . was finding utterance through him. Two women, his disciples, were also believed to be prophets, mouthpieces of the Holy Spirit. The three taught that the Spirit had revealed to them the early end of the world, and that the New Jerusalem would 'come down out of heaven from God,' . . . and that it would be fixed in Phrygia.<sup>9</sup>

The movement, thus, stood or fell by the assertion that the Holy Spirit had been especially revealed in Montanus.<sup>10</sup>

Montanus and his followers were admirably seeking to come closer to the Lord--to know and do his will. They sought to know him through the direct encounter of him through his Spirit. This direct encounter was manifested through the use of prophecy in which God spoke directly through the mouth of a human--in this case, Montanus, or one of his prophetesses. It was believed that only this direct, non-mediated form would allow God's true word to come to his church which had shown that it had lost its vitality due to its institutionalization of the living Spirit. Montanus and his followers believed that the return of the church to its true heritage could only be accomplished as it listened to that living Spirit.<sup>11</sup> Montanus believed that there was a difference between the visible form of the church as an institution and those who belonged to the church invisible as believers. He identified the revelation of the Paraclete in

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<sup>9</sup>Latourette, p. 128.

<sup>10</sup>R. A. Knox, *Enthusiasm* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), p. 34.

<sup>11</sup>Latourette, p. 128f.

John 14:16 with the spiritual religion of his followers. It was he who first offered the word a "pneumatic," as contra-distinguished from a "psychic" Church.<sup>12</sup>

The actual exterior manifestations of this prophecy are unknown to us. Possibly, if Tertullian's seven volumes on *Ecstasy* had been preserved a more accurate judgment could be made concerning the exact type of prophesy involved. There is, however, evidence at hand which speaks of the ecstatic nature of Montanist prophecy. Eusebius so characterized Montanus:

He became beside himself and being suddenly in a sort of frenzy and ecstasy, he raved, and began to babble and utter strange things, prophesying in a manner contrary to the constant custom of the church handed down by tradition from the beginning.<sup>13</sup>

While it may be stated that ecstasy in itself is not what is objected to, it must be maintained that this particular experiential structure of the spiritual gifts does not correspond to the content-significance of spiritual realities as is found in I Corinthians--which is the edification of the entire body, and which means intelligibility and coherency so that all may judge. The old mistake of Corinth was repeated, and the ecstatic, sensational aspect of prophecy was put before the spiritual good of the community. As will be seen, a first error usually compounds into a series of subsequent errors which are established to maintain the validity of the first and soon dangerous tendencies began to reveal themselves.

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<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>13</sup>Eusebius, V,16, 231.



There were soon those who professed that they had learned more from Montanus and his followers than from the Law and the Prophets or even the Gospel, some even venturing to say that there was in them something greater than Christ himself.<sup>14</sup> As the movement progressed the Montanists began to quarrel with the local church which refused to acknowledge the claims or validity of their prophecy. For the Montanist, as well as for the spiritual enthusiast of other generations, a thing can only be right *or* wrong--there are no shades of grey--everything is black or white and "there is no distinction to be made between council and precept."<sup>15</sup> The church was either holy or it was not. Therefore, if the Montanist prophecy was right then the prophetic voice of the church must be wrong. With this idea of being divinely right may come the idea of *being* divine. Montanus said of himself, "I am the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost," and "Neither an angel, nor an ambassador, but I, the Lord, the Father am come."<sup>16</sup> While one may say that he was only referring to the inward mystical experience of losing his own personality and replacing it with the identification of Christ, it must be asked how far this process can go before the enthusiast claims that his own personality has completely disappeared and has been replaced by a divine incarnation? The dangers are all too obvious.

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<sup>14</sup>Swete, p. 71.

<sup>15</sup>Knox, p. 48.

<sup>16</sup>Eusebius, *A New Eusebius* (London: S.P.C.K., 1968), p. 113.

To correct these dangers the church took certain measures against the movement. The first church council since Apostolic times was called to deal with the movement and Montanists were expelled from the church and banned from communion.<sup>17</sup> An important point to remember is that Montanism was rejected not only because it threatened the unity of the church during a tenuous period of its history but also because it threatened the authority of the existing ecclesiastical structure. As De Soyres points out, "No government is possible if the nominal sovereign is liable to the checks which Montanist prophecy would, if suffered to remain in the church, have continually interposed."<sup>18</sup>

Attempting an evaluation of the place of spiritual realities in the Montanist movement is difficult. Since most of the spiritual gifts are mentioned only in passing and most of the historical writing about it was written by its opponents such an evaluation is complicated. But, as has been mentioned in another place, the question at hand is not of what did the spiritual gifts consist, but rather in what way were they structured or used in experience; and, did their use contribute to the unity of the church? Historically, the Montanist movement provides definite forms of experiential expressions which provide an evaluative tool which can be used to determine if it used spiritual realities properly. That is, did the use of spiritual gifts edify and unify the church or did they bring division and schism?

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<sup>17</sup>Knox, p. 31.

<sup>18</sup>John De Soyres, *Montanism and the Primitive Church* (Lexington, KY: American Theological Library Association, 1965), p. 22.

The important historical question to be asked at this point is, did the division of the church over the charismatic-enthusiastic nature of Montanism occur because the Montanists went schismatic or because the church forced them into schism? It will be seen that in objectively looking at the movement, it was the enthusiastic nature of the charismatic experience involved in Montanism which first rejected the church and thereby was the first step toward schism. Tillemont points out that the Montanist attitude from the first was schismatic, for to call a fellow Christian "psychic" or "animal" because they followed the ordinary discipline of the church was "Une assez grande marque de schisme."<sup>19</sup> Thus, by this criterion, it may be said that the Montanist movement was schismatic in nature and used the spiritual gifts improperly as they structured their spiritual experience in a form of expression which is inconsistent with biblical guidelines and thereby inherently schismatic. In the end, the Montanists developed a ministry of their own with their own patriarch and by the third century had churches of their own as far away as Africa.<sup>20</sup>

What must now be determined is the reason why the form which the Montanist experience took proved to be schismatic in nature. Since prophecy was the main focus of Montanism its structure will be analyzed to see at what point it became schismatic in the movement. Certainly it was not prophecy as prophecy which was the schismatic

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<sup>19</sup>Tillemont, *Mémoire pour servir à L'historié ecclésiastique* (Venice, 1732), II, 'Les Montanistes, IV, as quoted in Knox, p. 32.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*

point. The debate focused not on the legitimate place of prophecy, which the church accepted, but on the claims of Montanus to be the exclusive and only mouthpiece of the Spirit and his prophecies to be the normative standard for the rest of the church.<sup>21</sup> Also to be considered is the way in which the prophecy was structured, which was in clear contra-distinction to the biblical guidelines and the convictions of the church. As has been pointed out the prophecies of Montanus were given in an ecstatic state, with the prophet being swept away by the force of the experience. Eusebius stated that the false prophet speaks in a trance or "abnormal ecstasy" which induces irresponsibility and freedom from restraint and that it will " . . . end with involuntary madness of the soul . . . and that they cannot show any prophet under either the Old or the New (Covenant) who was moved by the Spirit in this way."<sup>22</sup> Apparently, by abnormal ecstasy was meant that the Montanist prophets spoke while they were still in an ecstatic trance. The church, on the other hand, argued that true prophets would say nothing until they had regained their normal consciousness--they may have legitimately experienced in ecstasy but they did not speak in it authentically.<sup>23</sup>

Two definitive points are brought out by this material concerning the schismatic character of the Montanist movement. The first

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<sup>21</sup>Henry Bettenson, (ed.) *Documents of the Christian Church* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 77f.

<sup>22</sup>Eusebius, *A New Eusebius*, p. 112.

<sup>23</sup>Knox, p. 43.

is that the structure of the Montanist experience was too individualistic and thereby removed from its proper function as a part of the entire body. It became intolerant of community judgment on itself and repudiated, by its actions, the historical traditions of the church. The second point is that the ecstatic state of the experience became an end in itself rather than a means by which the Spirit worked. To be remembered is the fact that ecstasy *per se* is not being faulted. Rather, the form in which it is structured, is faulted. The biblical guidelines call for the test of coherency and accountability of the prophet to the body in the determination of the legitimacy of any particular prophecy and those guidelines were ignored in the Montanist movement. Thus, the Montanist movement characterized certain attitudes regarding spiritual realities which are a constant threat in the face of the neo-Pentecostal movement which is liable to similar abuses. These are: (1) An individualistic rather than catholic application of the works of the Spirit. There is a personal interpretation of a limited charismatic experience which becomes exempt from reflective evaluation by the entire believing community; (2) An intense rigorism which divides Christians into categories of "spiritual" and "unspiritual"--those that are not being those who experience the Spirit differently and do not accept uncritically all that one who is spiritually superior (or so he would say) says; (3) Criticism of the church and eventual separation from it as being too worldly; (4) Expression of experience in terms which are held to be normative for all without consideration of historical tradition or the voice of the entire

church; and (5) Experience the validity of which is established by its ecstatic character (its structure) rather than its content.

When one inquires about the positive elements of the Montanist movement, one may receive from two different authors diametrically opposite answers. R. A. Knox in his excellent work, *Enthusiasm*, states:

The history of Montanism is not to be read as that of a great spiritual renewal, maligned by its enemies. It is that of naked fanaticism, which tried to stampede the church into greater severity, when she had forgotten how to be severe.<sup>24</sup>

Although this may well be true, it does not seem to take into account all the facts. A church which is full of spiritual vigor would not give rise to those who felt she had lost that vigor. The institutionalization of the living spirit was, and still is, a threat to that vigor. This threat became even more marked after the advent of Montanism. The excesses of Montanism brought on such a severe reaction from the church that the church in wanting to avoid such destructive enthusiastic tendencies sought to find the Spirit not in his living presence but in the sacramentalism of office. This attitude sees the Spirit as an organ of the church which exists in, for, and only through the institutional church. Eduard Schweizer indicates how thought concerning the work of the Holy Spirit changed with this conception of the church,

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<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*

It is no longer so, that a man whom God marks out by the gift of the Spirit is appointed to a particular ministry, but rather the man who is duly appointed to an office is guaranteed to possess the Spirit of God along with it.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, the positive side of the Montanist movement was to stir within the church the centrality of the work of the Spirit and the spiritual gifts. As H. B. Swete comments:

. . . the emphasis which he (Montanus) laid upon the work of the Paraclete in the living Church deserves the warm gratitude of all who recognize that neither an orthodox creed nor an unbroken succession can satisfy without the stirring of a supernatural life.<sup>26</sup>

The Montanist movement thus began and remains still as a reminder of something beyond the institution of the church, and yet its force as a positive contribution was destroyed by the misuse of its gifts as it failed to correspond its structure of experience with its true biblical content.

### JANSENISM

Jansenism was an enthusiastic-charismatic movement of the seventeenth century. Its importance in this study lies in its enthusiastic character which influenced other movements which more overtly experienced the *charismata* and the fact that its theology is characteristic of all overtly charismatic movements. Jansenism was the contemporary of Pietism and Quietism, movements which both stressed

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<sup>25</sup>Eduard Schweizer, *Spirit of God* (London: Black, 1960), p. 108; see also Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought* (London: SCM Press, 1968), p. 41.

<sup>26</sup>Swete, p. 83.

the charismatic-enthusiastic approach to God.

Cornelius Jansen was the founder of Jansenism which was a development from the Catholic Reformation in France. Jansen spoke out against the pagan moralism he believed he saw about him in the church. As a deterrent he emphasized "personal religious experience, the direct relation of the individual soul to its maker which might come by sudden conversion."<sup>27</sup> His theology was emphatically enthusiastic and he maintained that the church had been taking the wrong direction ever since the twelfth century.<sup>28</sup> A convent for nuns, Port Royal, became a Jansenist center, and was if not actually, at least symbolic to them of the "True Church" or the "invisible" church.<sup>29</sup> Although it was not actually called a sect, it had all the earmarks and the exclusiveness of one. In true enthusiastic fashion they sought to separate themselves from the world and the exchange of thought with it. In essence what they did when they separated themselves from the world, was to separate themselves from the rest of the church--thus becoming an *ecclesiola* or church within the church.<sup>30</sup> As the enthusiastic movements of this period are examined one will find that the *ecclesiola* concept was the first precursor to schism. The enthusiast wants, and needs, to see immediate results because he is not content to let the wheat and the tares grow side by side. He must, even in

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<sup>27</sup>Latourette, p. 879.

<sup>28</sup>Knox, p. 217.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 207.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*



this world, draw a line between the sheep and goats.

Thus a little group of devout souls isolates itself from the rest of society, to form a nucleus for the New Jerusalem; and in doing so it loses touch with the currents of thought that flow outside, grows partisan in its attitude, sterile of new ideas.<sup>31</sup>

With each day of this extended withdrawal the point of unity is stretched and schism almost assured.

The Jansenist movement focused its charismatic attention on a number of manifestations, particularly healing. The healings and attendant manifestations occurred mainly at the cemetery of Saint-Médard at the grave of a Jansenist minister. More than 200 miracles were alleged to have occurred there between the years 1728 and 1731.<sup>32</sup>

The authenticity of those healings is not what is at question at this point--as that question can now never be determined. But what is important here, as been stated throughout this dissertation, is the structure in which these experiences of healing took form and their relationship to the content function of spiritual gifts as is found in I Corinthians 12-14. R. A. Knox states that in the cemetery one witnessed "Men falling like epileptics, others swallowing pebbles, glass, and even live coals, woman walking feet in air . . . you heard nothing but groaning, singing, shrieking, whistling, declaiming, prophesying. . . ." <sup>33</sup>

One of the prime figures of the movement and one whose works may have directly contributed to the ecstatic nature of the charismatic manifestations, was the Abbé Etémare. He had reached the

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<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 230.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 376.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 377.

conclusion that the church had unchurched herself and that salvation was only among the faithful remnant of Catholics who were appealing against the bull *Unigenitus* which ruled out Jansenist teachings.<sup>34</sup> This conviction drove him to the belief which has often shown charismatic enthusiasts as having vivid imaginations, he began prophesying the coming apocalypse. It was this apocalyptic atmosphere which laid the framework for the bodily manifestations at Saint-Médard,<sup>35</sup> since the end times would necessarily be accompanied by such special signs.

Analyzing the structure of the manifestations one finds that the relationship between form and content had broken down. Mistaking means for ends was the major problem in this broken relationship. The ecstatic manifestations themselves were first interpreted as corollaries with the miraculous healings, as signs of their divine source. However, as time went on, the manifestations no longer were significatories of the divine action but came to be sought for their own sake. One wonders how barking like a dog for two hours daily<sup>36</sup> could long sustain a logical connection between the content and form of expression no matter how significant the experience happened to be. Being separated from the main body of the church the enthusiast also becomes separated from its logic and the voice of intelligibility which is the response of the entire church.

In making an evaluation of the structure of the charismatic elements of Jansenism one finds that it, too, like the Montanist movement before it, was inherently schismatic not because it exercised

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<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 378.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 379.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 381.

charismatic gifts but because it failed to bridge the span between the biblical guidelines (which defined the content) to the structuring of the experience. The Jansenist, like the Montanist, exercised charismatic manifestations outside the biblical guideline that whatever *charismata* was used, that it be used to edify the entire body. Instead, the spiritual manifestations were used only as the pet of a small segment of believers without regard to the rest of the body. It may be said that there were some Jansenists who were divided about the spiritual manifestations among themselves. Père Du Guet, an older, prominent Jansenist repudiated the convulsions as "contrary to the majesty of God, the holiness of his worship, the honour of the church, the purity of morals, and public decency."<sup>37</sup>

That a prominent member of the movement should condemn the obvious abuses reassures one to some extent that not all enthusiasts are unaware when such abuses arise. Yet, the fact remains, it is still a schismatic group which eventually even encounters schism within itself. Soon the *ecclesiola* finds other *ecclesiolas* within itself and the process of schism starts again--one ism soon divides into numerous other sub-isms.<sup>38</sup>

In this study, one finds that the Jansenist movement characterized certain attitudes regarding charismatic-enthusiastic experience which are a constant threat in the face of the neo-Pentecostal movement which is liable to similar abuses. These are: (1) Criticism of the church and eventual separation from it, forming a church within a

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<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 387.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*

church and thus no longer listening to the voice of tradition; (2) An eschatological outlook which is highly apocalyptic and which gives fire to an overly emotional approach to its character; (3) Experience whose validity is established by its ecstatic nature rather than its content and thus which mistakes means for ends and thereby sees attendant physical manifestations as what is important rather than the meaning of what has spiritually occurred; (4) Separation from the world and all of its ideas; and (5) Creating rival sub-isms (as did the Corinthian church) within itself, attaching themselves to those particular figures who support their view.

In looking at the Jansenist movement we see that in an Age of Enlightenment and Deism, where the spiritual was dismissed and ignored, it presented at first a viable source of renewal and strength to the church but in its progress it became ingrown and restrictive to the free flow of the Spirit.

. . . it was like a limb which has been tied up with a tourniquet, so that the blood no longer courses freely in it. For that reason its splendid energies declined, its ardours paled, its literary achievement dwindled into insignificance. We may yet need, in coming centuries which lie before us, a tightening-up of our origins. But if such a movement owes anything to Jansenism, it will owe nothing more than those lessons of greater prudence which the Church, with her long memory, derives from the record of failure in the past.<sup>39</sup>

Still, one must ask, if the necessity of such a movement is felt, is there not something missing within the church out of which it grew? Once again the church felt the cry of those who sought a deeper spirituality and a deeper sense of the moving of God in their lives.

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<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 230.

But, again, the positive element of their experience and its potential for edifying the Body of Christ was destroyed because of their misunderstanding and misuse of its charismatic character. Indeed, the neo-Pentecostal movement of today must seriously consider the lessons of history if they are not to repeat them.

### PIETISM

Contemporaneous with Jansenism, the Pietistic movement came into prominence in Lutheran Germany. During the time prior to its emergence, Philip Spener, the movement's founder, felt that the church and society had grown stale and corrupt during the long period of dry scholasticism. Spener believed that the vitality of the Spirit, which had characterized the primitive church, was no longer present. Spener, therefore, was "intent upon a moral and spiritual reformation . . . what he stressed was genuine conversion and the cultivation of the Christian life," and so he "preached the necessity of the new birth, a personal warm Christian experience, and the cultivation of Christian virtues."<sup>40</sup> To accomplish this he proposed the formation of primitive apostolic church groups which were to help people rediscover the meaning of scripture, the vitality of the Spirit, and the call to piety and holy living.

The motives were simple and pure but the marks of the enthusiastic movement soon began to appear. The division between devotion

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<sup>40</sup>Latourette, p. 895.

and academic learning soon led to gnostic tendencies in his groups. The small groups which had formed to better the spiritual lives of its members became divisive as they began to form elite groups which held themselves superior to other Christians they felt were less devoted. Some began to "denounce ministers as unconverted and godless" and refused to receive the sacraments from "unworthy" ministers.<sup>41</sup> Soon the movement became the focus for the formation of factions outside the official church which became separatist groups without authority from the main body. As Spener's groups became more devoted in their spiritual lives they began to read scripture more, and gradually looked more for direct guidance from God. When these people believe that they are receiving such direct guidance, they begin to trust in this direct guidance rather than the guidance which comes from scripture and the tradition of the church. This puts these people outside the authority and discipline of both scripture and the church. The person now has a higher authority--God "Himself"--and therefore, why should he be subject to any lesser authority such as the church?

To be considered along with Pietism is Moravianism which may be seen as an extended form of Pietism.<sup>42</sup> This movement began in 1722 with a few refugees from the persecutions of Protestants on Bohemia and Moravia who settled in a community known as Herrnhut. Its founder, Count Zinzendorf was reared in a strongly Pietistic atmosphere and had

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<sup>41</sup> Philip Jacob Spener, *Pia Desideria* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), pp. 19f.

<sup>42</sup> Knox, p. 408.

"an intense desire to spread the Christian faith throughout the world," and it was in his "handful of persecuted refugees that he saw the means of fulfilling that vision."<sup>43</sup>

Although the Pietistic movement did not overtly advocate the *charismata* its illuminist theology was a precursor as well as able servant to later enthusiastic movements. "Moravianism was essentially neither just a doctrine nor a discipline, but a spirituality."<sup>44</sup> This was a spirituality which found its meaning in interior illuminism. The Pietistic mind set looked back to signs of superior (supposed) spirituality in church history, whether among the orthodox or the heretics, as examples of a spirituality now lost. This type of thinking soon resulted in a two-class division of Christians. As Roland Bainton states:

This type of liberalism fostered church unity among all those who like the Pietists felt themselves kindled by a profound religious spirit, although at the same time it produced divisions between them and other less fervent Christians.<sup>45</sup>

Thus, the inevitable division of those who were spiritual and those who were not was effected and the first step toward schism was made.

Concomitant with this illuminism came an extreme personal sentimentalism and an abhorrence of all that was human. The Moravians established a deep distrust of all forms of human knowledge. "The Brethren were not to use their brains; they were to wish that they

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<sup>43</sup>Latourette, p. 897.

<sup>44</sup>Knox, p. 408.

<sup>45</sup>Roland H. Bainton, *The Horizon History of Christianity* (New York: Avon Books, 1966), p. 355.

had no brains."<sup>46</sup> The condemnation of anything which had to do with human initiative was so strong that the Bible itself was described as a "nauseous thing," and when "anyone gives himself to meditating on the Bible, it is a sure sign that he never had the least spark of grace in his heart."<sup>47</sup>

It is interesting to note about enthusiastic movements that their eccentricities may be found side-by-side with their positive achievements--both appear to have evolved from the same root.<sup>48</sup> While it is not the ideas of pietism or illuminism which are being criticized, it is the form in which they structured themselves that is. As will be shown later, the interior illuminist tendency of the Pietistic movement as interpreted by John Wesley had a strong impact on the rise of the Pentecostal movement of this century. While the Pietistic approach is not being criticized, some of its applications are. We find that the Pietistic movement characterized certain attitudes regarding enthusiasm which are a constant threat in the face of the neo-Pentecostal movement, which is liable to similar abuses. These are: (1) An almost gnostic tendency to piety which is individualistic, illuministic and mystical--none of which are perhaps wrong in themselves, but which were carried to extreme positions and the extremity of their positions put them above the authority of the traditions of the church and even the authority of scripture; (2) Criticism of the church and eventual separation from it--the visible versus the invisible church; (3) The scorn of intellectual pursuits and a mystical

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<sup>46</sup>Knox, p. 414.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 416.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*



approach to the Holy Spirit as the sole guide to correct theological interpretation; (4) The division of Christians as spiritual and non-spiritual; (5) The looking back unrealistically to a past age in the church which was supposed to perfect spiritually.

It is not to be inferred from this analysis of the Pietist structure of experience that it was all of a divisive nature. On the contrary, some of its most central doctrines have had a lasting and beneficial effect on the well-being of the spiritual life and the work of the church. The purpose of this dissertation, however, has been to point to those areas in spiritual experience where abuse and schism are likely to occur. The final evaluation of the charismatic-enthusiastic movements will consider their divisive elements within the scope of their entire structure and thereby make conclusions on that basis.

#### METHODISM

In his study of enthusiastic movements and their manifestations R. A. Knox understands Methodism as the most significant.<sup>49</sup> Dale Bruner concurs when he states that:

Methodism is the most important of the modern traditions for the student of Pentecostal origins to understand . . . Pentecostalism is primarily Methodism's extended incarnation . . . Methodism brought to its ultimate consequences.<sup>50</sup>

It is with this in mind that the enthusiastic character and theology of Wesley's Methodism will be examined.

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<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>50</sup> Frederick Dale Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), p. 37.

The doctrinal concern of Wesley with the action of the Holy Spirit arose from his own experience when religion became *Christianity* and when a distant event became contemporaneously personal and real. Wesley sought and found the meaning of this personal religion in the concept of the work of the Holy Spirit, which Wesley put in the forefront of his proclamation of holiness. "The Evangelical Revival is a reflection of the early church after Pentecost when the Christ-like God became dynamically present and real to men as the Holy Spirit."<sup>51</sup>

Wesley's Aldersgate experience brought him to a place in his own life which convinced him that nominal Christianity is useless without a personal, vital, living relationship to the Holy Spirit.

Wesley employed the term "inspiration" to characterize the ministry of the Holy Spirit in Christian experience. This inspiration Wesley claimed as "The main doctrine of the Methodists."<sup>52</sup> The nature of this indwelling of the Spirit is characterized by Wesley in four ways (following Starkey's order<sup>53</sup>). (1) First, it is *perceptible* and one is inwardly conscious of the Spirit's moving.<sup>54</sup> Wesley concluded that as sure as the light of the sun is to the physical senses, so

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<sup>51</sup>Lycurgus M. Starkey, Jr., *The Work of the Holy Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 15.

<sup>52</sup>John Wesley, *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.* (London: Epworth Press, 1931), 2:64.

<sup>53</sup>Starkey, pp. 18ff.

<sup>54</sup>Wesley, *Letters*, 5:364.

the persuasive awareness of the Spirit's work should be to the Christian.<sup>55</sup> This inward perception of the Spirit's moving was the supreme evidence of the validity of Christ's presence. Wesley held that this inward, experiential evidence is to hold priority above the external, traditional text-book evidence of Christianity because it is "contemporary, comprehensible, and intimate."<sup>56</sup>

Wesley frequently used such phrases which emphasized the experiential nature of this inward working of the Holy Spirit.<sup>57</sup> He warned against any rejection of such feelings as being unauthentic as a witness to the indwelling Spirit. He said:

. . . for if these cannot be inwardly felt, nothing can. You reject all joy in the Holy Ghost; for if we cannot be sensible of this, it is no joy at all. You reject the peace of God, which if it be not felt in the inmost soul, is a dream, a notion, an empty name. You therefore reject the whole inward kingdom of God. . .<sup>58</sup>

(2) The second characteristic of the Spirit's working is its *immediacy*. The Spirit ministers directly to each believer according to definite needs without any mediation.<sup>59</sup> God thus works immediately on our souls by the direct inspiration of his Holy Spirit. (3) A third characteristic was the *variety* in which the Spirit might choose to work. Wesley said in counseling a convert:

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<sup>55</sup> John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament* (London: Epworth Press, 1948), I Cor. 11:4.

<sup>56</sup> Wesley, *Letters*, 2:383-88.

<sup>57</sup> Starkey, p. 18.

<sup>58</sup> Wesley, *Letters*, 2:206.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 4:39-40.

It has pleased Him to work the latter way in you from the beginning; and it is not improbable He will continue (as He has begun) to work in a gentle almost insensible manner. Let Him take his own way. . . .<sup>60</sup>

Thus, Wesley saw that while the *same* Spirit works in all believers, the method in which the Spirit works may find endless *variety*. (4) Lastly, Wesley saw that the ministry of the Spirit was *available* to every believer in every generation. Wesley saw that the Age of the Spirit which came at Pentecost was effected through the glorification of Christ at God's right hand, and whose life and death were "designed to represent, proclaim, and purchase for us this gift of the Spirit."<sup>61</sup> The Holy Spirit is given universally to all and "not to a spiritual elite or a special age, but to all men who will trustingly accept Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord."<sup>62</sup>

Thus Wesley perceived the work of the Spirit in a very personal fashion. It is interesting to note the way he used the words of feeling in the account of his Aldersgate experience (*italics mine*):

. . . I *felt* my heart strangely warmed. I *felt* I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an *assurance* was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.<sup>63</sup>

As the English Methodist Dr. Leslie Davison comments, the Wesleys studied holiness not just as an academic theory but as a living

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 7:298.

<sup>61</sup> John Wesley, *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.* (London: Mason, 1829), 8:106-7.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 8:76-111.

<sup>63</sup> John Wesley, *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.* (London: Epworth Press, 1909), 1:476.

experience of the working of the Spirit.

They knew from their own experiences that the operation of the Spirit could be consciously and sensibly felt in a profound movement within the soul. When we translate the particular idiom and theological formulae of the Eighteenth century in our own language, we discover how truly and accurately the Wesleys are describing the experiences Baptism in the Spirit and the process of sanctification.<sup>64</sup>

From Wesley's conviction of the self-authenticating character of the indwelling of the Spirit came the Methodist doctrine of assurance whereby one is sure of his salvation by the internal testimony of the Spirit. This assurance or witness of the Spirit was also for Wesley given concrete validity by external gifts given by the Spirit. Wesley taught that the Holy Spirit still bestows extraordinary gifts or *charismata* where the Gospel is preached with power and men are alive to God.<sup>65</sup> Wesley did not limit the *charismata* to the ancient church and history and in his reply to Conyers Middleton, who wrote that Methodists were claiming gifts no longer given by the Spirit, replied that the disappearance of these works is attributable to the transformation of the church from a spiritual to a secular position which began with the acceptance of Constantine's favorable stance toward the church.<sup>66</sup>

Wesley considered such spiritual gifts as healing, casting out demons, prophecy, and discerning of spirits as gifts which are involved

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<sup>64</sup>Leslie Davison, *Pathway to Power* (Watchung, NJ: Charisma, 1972), p. 56.

<sup>65</sup>Wesley, *Explanatory Notes*, I Thess. 1:5.

<sup>66</sup>Wesley, *Letters*, 2:326-68.

in the holiness of an individual. In 1750 Wesley stated he was convinced "that the Montanists in the second and third centuries were real, scriptural Christians," and that the miraculous gifts were withdrawn when faith and holiness were lost. He pointed out that "dry, formal, orthodox men began even then to ridicule whatever gifts they had not themselves and to decry them all as either madness or imposture."<sup>67</sup>

Having noted this, it should be pointed out that,

Having shown such gifts were still a possibility, Wesley stated that Methodists held no particular claim to them and sought only those gifts and operations which every Christian is privileged to seek and receive.<sup>68</sup>

Wesley never overtly encouraged his followers to seek spiritual gifts *per se*, but instead told them to seek that which God would give them.

That such a theology of experience might be open to criticism is apparent by the many, who, as R. A. Knox states, brought charges against the early Methodists which bore strong resemblance to the charges one might bring against a Montanist or an Anabaptist.<sup>69</sup> The familiar stories of those who, upon coming under the conviction of the Spirit, fell to the ground, and exhibited any number of physical manifestations abound and hold a strong resemblance to many of the characteristics of the modern-day, classical, and neo-Pentecostal movements.

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<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, 7:326.

<sup>68</sup>Starkey, p. 76.

<sup>69</sup>Knox, p. 449.

Wesley was not blind to the dangers of enthusiasm which lay in his doctrines. He was ever concerned with the problems that could arise.

How many have mistaken the voice of their own imagination for this witness of the Spirit of God . . . While they were doing the works of the devil! These are truly and properly enthusiasts; and indeed, in the worst sense of the word . . . Who can then be surprised, if many reasonable men seeing the dreadful effects of this delusion, and labouring to keep at the utmost distance from it, should sometimes lean toward another extreme?<sup>70</sup>

Wesley ever sought to find the medium between both extremes,

But is there any necessity laid upon us running either into one extreme or the other? May we not steer a middle course--keep a sufficient distance from that Spirit of error and enthusiasm, without denying the gift of God, and giving up the great privilege of His children?<sup>71</sup>

Wesley was trying to create a balance between experience and the rational so neither would be abused or overused. It would seem that he tended toward the rational. As early as 1739, Wesley had warned believers at Bristol not to judge the Spirit by which anyone spoke by:

dreams, visions or revelations supposed to be made to their souls, any more than by their tears, or any involuntary effects wrought upon their bodies . . . all these . . . are of a disputable and doubtful nature. . . .<sup>72</sup>

This is not to say that Wesley felt that God could not manifest his will to persons by these means, but that all such manifestations must

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<sup>70</sup>John Wesley, *Sermons on Several Occasions* (London: Epworth Press, 1964), p. 111.

<sup>71</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup>Knox, p. 546.

undergo tests to their authenticity. For as Wesley said, "how frequently do men mistake herein! How are they misled by pride, and a warm imagination, to ascribe such impulses or impressions, dreams, or visions, to God. . . ." <sup>73</sup>

In his interest with the *charismata*, Wesley held supreme in his thought that the greatest miracle, the most decisive demonstration of the supernatural, is the regenerative work of the Spirit in the soul by which a sinful man is pardoned and cleansed and changed into the image of Christ, being reconciled to God. <sup>74</sup> All else follows and is derived from the gift of the Spirit.

In looking at the structure of experience in the early Methodist movement, we find that of all the enthusiastic orientated movements so far examined it best conformed to the New Testament guidelines. Wesley enjoined his followers to seek the Holy Spirit in an experiential way, yet in a way which was controlled by concern for the body, social morality, proper conduct, and rational thinking. It seemed that of all the movements it should least of all cause schism; and yet, it did break away from the church. The reasons for this are significant in understanding possible schismatic tendencies in the present neo-Pentecostal movement.

The reasons for the schism between the Church of England and the Methodists are complex. They were economic, social, and political as well as religious, all of which contributed to the eventual break.

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 537.

<sup>74</sup> Wesley, *Sermons*, p. 115.



But significantly, it was the structure of Methodist religion which widened the breach and was the first step toward division. The stage of the Deistic eighteenth century was badly set for enthusiasm and, therefore, for Methodism's experiential religion. The French enthusiasts:

Had made no good name for themselves, and they were still active when Methodism began. The Moravians, connected quite understandably with Wesley in the public mind, were soon to be the talk of the town through Zinzendorf's eccentricities.<sup>75</sup>

Then, as R. A. Knox says:

Wesley's preaching begins, and what the world hears (for the world only hears what is of news-value) is that the audience on such occasions is apt to fall down in a fit and lie screaming on the ground; it hears of George Bell . . . announcing the exact day of the ensuing month on which the world will come to an end, and being treated by many of his fellow Methodists as an oracle.<sup>76</sup>

Wesley made no apology for many of the manifestations. When glossolalia was experienced among his converts he did not deny that the manifestations could be from God.<sup>77</sup> The popular following and growth of the movement amounting to tens of thousands could only look to the established church like a splinter movement, even though Wesley avowed to his dying day that he did not want to separate from the established church.<sup>78</sup> The separation of the two was most likely assured when Wesley took upon himself the right to ordain ministers

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<sup>75</sup>Knox, p. 505.

<sup>76</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup>Steve Durasoff, *Bright Wind of the Spirit* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1972), p. 39.

<sup>78</sup>Halford Luccock, *The Story of Methodism* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1926), p. 174.

to serve his societies, to which his brother, Charles, to his death, could not give his acceptance.

When asked who ostracized whom, even the Methodist historian Luccock states that it is far from certain that the judgment that the established church forced Wesley out is correct, but that, "it was not the only time in which the purposes of God have been secured by means of exodus."<sup>79</sup>

And so, one of the greatest renewals in the history of English history and the church, which started, grew, and continued outside of the church, began. As a charismatic orientated enthusiastic movement it hardly meets the usual form of other enthusiastic movements which have been so far examined. And yet, as we look at its structure of experience, it was inherently schismatic also.

Wesley's doctrine of the Holy Spirit has been extensively looked at here because of its significant contribution to subsequent enthusiastic movements. In all of its good points, one may still find certain attitudes regarding enthusiasm which are a constant threat in the face of the neo-Pentecostal movement and which may be liable to abuse. These are: (1) The danger of experience being the sole rule by which the validity of an encounter with God is determined. There are certain dangers in making the pragmatic test of experience a condition for belief. As the Jesuit Donald Gelpi comments:

If the divine activity of man must meet the standards set by the preconceptions of human piety before one is willing to believe, then how does one's basic religious attitude differ

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<sup>79</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 179.

from acquiescence in the second temptation of Christ? That temptation was, of course, the temptation to test God, to place preconditions to faith which God must meet before one is willing to trust the deity.<sup>80</sup>

(2) The danger of illuminism in which the voice of the spirit is the final authority in the field of faith resulting in no final authority as each group testifies to its own authority. For Wesley, while scripture, sacrament, and tradition are the ordinary means of divine disclosure, the Holy Spirit is not necessarily bound to any of these.<sup>81</sup>

If one is seeking to feel the Spirit freely moving this is certainly one way, but the dangers must be realized. Doctrine without the Spirit is certainly dead, but the Spirit without doctrine is chaos;

(3) A doctrine of perfection which develops into a "second work of grace" doctrine (which would serve as an antecedent to the Pentecostal doctrine of the Baptism in the Spirit) which distorts the theological, simultaneous nature of justification and sanctification with sanctification being displaced theologically after justification rather than placing it with it. As Dale Bruner comments:

The major influence, then, of Methodism upon Pentecostalism has been the centering of spiritual desire on experience and especially on an experience subsequent to conversion, to be instantaneously engaged . . . requiring the meeting of certain conditions beyond conversion or justifying faith for its attainment.<sup>82</sup>

Though there are those who would disagree with that statement

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<sup>80</sup>Donald L. Gelpi, *Pentecostalism* (New York: Paulist Press, 1971), p. 26.

<sup>81</sup>Starkey, p. 76.

<sup>82</sup>Bruner, p. 38.

as truly accurate of Wesley,<sup>83</sup> yet it would be accurate to say that this is how other enthusiastic groups have interpreted what he said; and (4) The danger that faith is determined by feelings which leads to frustration when one's concepts of joy and elation which are equated with faith do not correspond to actuality. Thus, when one loses the feeling of elation he runs the danger of also losing his faith.

### HOLINESS-PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT

Due to the scope of this chapter, which has been basically looking at movements of enthusiasm in a general way, so this section will deal with the general characteristics of the Holiness-Pentecostal movement rather than with any one group involved in it.

While theologically Methodism may be seen as exerting the major influence on Pentecostalism, methodologically it was American revivalism which has been the most formative influence.<sup>84</sup> As Bruner observes:

The American predecessor and contemporary of Methodism, the Great Awakening, and its unique child, frontier revivalism, radically transformed America's understanding, appropriation, and application of the Christian faith.<sup>85</sup>

The main contribution that the Holiness-Pentecostal movement gave to American religion was an intense individualism and emotionalizing of Christian faith. That this should have been so is not

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<sup>83</sup>A. Skevington Wood, *The Burning Heart* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), p. 269.

<sup>84</sup>Bruner, p. 39.

<sup>85</sup>*Ibid.*

surprising, when seen in the light of the historical trends of the period.

The breakdown of authoritative, governmentally enforced orthodoxy, beginning in the late eighteenth century helped to make men more free; they were able to choose the religious way which pleased them . . . Freed from the necessity of accepting traditional orthodoxy, the church found itself proposing religious ideas which were more in line with rising rationalism and materialism.<sup>86</sup>

The Holiness-Pentecostal movement offered an alternative to the rising secularism of the period. It offered an enthusiastic internal religion to take the place of worldliness and apostasy as they saw it. Few of the denominational churches accepted the movement; and, it soon began to develop separate church bodies of its own, with the ensuing condemnation of the major denominations.

The theological center of the movement was the second experience of sanctification, or holiness, which was subsequent to conversion. It was during this period that the phrase "baptism in the Spirit" came into prominence and was applied to a spiritual crisis after a person's initial conversion experience.<sup>87</sup> But beyond this basic agreement, unanimity in their approach to perfection was not to be found in the movement and many groups were found splintering from the main body in order to give their own definition of perfection.<sup>88</sup> It was disagreement of this type which forced the Holiness-Pentecostal movement to separate and to take different paths and to be known

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<sup>86</sup>Morton T. Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1968), p. 70f.

<sup>87</sup>Durasoff, p. 49.

<sup>88</sup>*Ibid.*

separately as the Holiness movement and Pentecostal movement. The major Holiness groups taught that sanctification and the baptism of the Spirit were one and the same experience, while the Pentecostal groups maintained an experience even beyond sanctification feeling that there must be some further baptism of the Spirit which would take them still further into the fullness of Christ (a *third* experience beyond just justification and sanctification).

The content of this third experience came with the turning of the century through the life of an American Methodist minister, Charles F. Parham, who contrasted the sterility of his own ministry with the supernatural element of the New Testament. Parham and his students concluded that justifying faith was but the first step, and that a further experience of power to live the Christian life was made clear to them in the New Testament. They decided that this power was associated with the bestowal of the Holy Spirit and was described by some evidence of the gift of speaking in tongues in every instance.<sup>89</sup> They believed that without tongues there was no proof to one's self that one had really received the Holy Spirit. It was upon this point that the Pentecostal church was founded and still stands, and that it is the only experience a Christian needs in order to have the fullness of the Christian life.<sup>90</sup>

The new movement grew quickly and soon were splintering from

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<sup>89</sup>W. J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972), p. 32.

<sup>90</sup>Kelsey, p. 77.

their former churches and forming new churches of their own believing that separation was the only way to maintain the purity and integrity of their experience in the midst of the secularism they found in the church. Their history of growth and distinctives are recent enough for there to be no need to recount them.

The characteristics of the Holiness-Pentecostal movements are important in assessing where similar abuses and theological misconceptions may arise in the present neo-Pentecostal movement. The dangers involved in the movement were: (1) That glossolalia (or any other particular spiritual manifestation) is the one and only normative, evidential signifiatory of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. At the 1918 Pastor's Conference of the Assemblies of God, it was held and still stands, that any one who denies the singular evidential significance of glossolalia cannot be ordained in the church.<sup>91</sup> Believing they alone were right, they developed an exclusiveness which even today excludes them from the large federations and councils of churches; (2) The neglecting of philosophical, political, and social endeavors in behalf of individualistic inner experience. In the wake of rationalism and materialism the refuge to the personal and individualistic was natural; however, this also separated the individual from the world, and pushed them into seeking only that which could be considered "spiritual" (a gnostic tendency); (3) A repudiation and distrust for critical scholarship. Many of the ministers claimed no ordination except that of the Holy Spirit and glossolalia. The usual enthusiastic

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<sup>91</sup>Hollenweger, p. 22.

dichotomy between mind and spirit was present with all that has to do with mind and scholarship being disposed of, while relying on the Holy Spirit alone for correct interpretation of scripture, and believing that a conversion experience is the only necessary factor to be a fully mature Christian; (4) An emphasis on experience rather than the meaning of experience. Since they were concerned about little except enthusiasm, they would use any device to achieve it, and fell victim to stereotyped expressions of their emotions. Thus, if one did not fall or swoon when the Spirit came upon them, or speak in tongues, the Spirit really did not come upon them; and, (5) Neglect of theology for experience which results in an incorrect theological interpretation of the content-significance of the baptism in the Spirit and the spiritual gifts. This led to the structure of the experience dictating the content of the baptism rather than vice versa.

In order to gain a perspective on the neo-Pentecostal movement this study of other enthusiastic-charismatic orientated movements has been done to see how their structure of experience has been expressed in the history of the church. An overall, historical analysis of the movements examined will now be made.

### CONCLUSIONS

In the historical study made, certain definite characteristics are apparent concerning the nature of enthusiastic-charismatic experience which are a threat in light of the present-day neo-charismatic movement. It will be the main point of this evaluation that the



experience is, of itself, an authentic experience of encounter with God and that abuses of its structure are the result of an inaccurate and/or inadequate interpretation of the nature and consequence of its content as an authentic *Christian* or catholic charismatic experience.

This inaccurate interpretation throughout the history of the church has resulted in the general characteristics outlined below which have rendered the experience liable to abuse and have contributed to the destruction of its internal integrity as an encounter with God.

(1) An imbalance not merely of doctrine but of emphasis.<sup>92</sup>

The enthusiast of all the movements examined tended toward doctrinal polarization. The enthusiast tends to isolate one particular doctrine and to exaggerate its emphasis, whether it is glossolalia or apocalyptic prophecy, to the stagnation of other essential doctrines. It is not the avowal of certain doctrines which is the point of contention, but the exaggerated place of importance they hold in relationship to the total scope of the Christian faith and life. Such a position of exaggeration treads precariously close to fanaticism, which is its usual outcome. As the Jesuit, Gelpi, comments:

It is precisely at the level of such aberrations that orthodox enthusiasm has been forced to quarrel with the divisive enthusiast. The latter's spontaneous inclination is, of course, to accuse the orthodox of denying his experience. But it is not with the divisive enthusiast's religious experience that the orthodox enthusiast quarrels. It is with the divisive enthusiast's rigidly dogmatic interpretation and causal evaluation of that experience.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup>Knox, p. 580.

<sup>93</sup>Gelpi, pp. 194f.

(2) An emphasis on the structure of the experience rather than its content-meaning. Threats to the integrity of the experience which arise from such a focus consists of (following Gelpi): (a) The attempt to interpret that experience in categories which are incompatible with the experience itself; (b) The effort to explain causes of the charismatic experience in such a way as to deny implicitly its character; (c) The effort to equate limited aspects of the charismatic experience with the whole of that experience.<sup>94</sup> Such abuses of the experience lead to stereotyped expressions of the experience and the emotions involved in it.

The emphasis of the enthusiast is on the immediate, subjective experience of the Spirit in the individual. He stresses the sovereignty of the Spirit to such an extent that the Spirit is separated from the historical revelation of Christ and supercedes the incarnate Christ. Thus, the experience of one's own conversion is the essential factor, and the historical facts of Christ serve as a stimulant to the subjective experience in the individual rather than as the formative content of the experience.<sup>95</sup>

(3) The tendency toward inner illuminism which disregards tradition, scholarship, authority, and scripture in favor of the direct impression of the Holy Spirit on the individual's soul. History has made it abundantly clear of the twofold danger involved in

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>95</sup> G. S. Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956), pp. 68f.

illumination; (a) That although God does speak to the inner heart of man, even authentic religious experience is liable to lead to interpretations which have no clear claim to its origin in divine authority or inspiration, and (b) That these interpretations can destroy the integrity of the initial experience from which they are derived.

The problem lies in the interpretation of the nature and consequences of the charismatic experience. It is evident that interpretation not only informs the experience but also gives it its specific character, form, and theological emphasis. Gelpi again astutely observes:

These movements went awry, not for want of sincerity and enthusiasm, but for want of a competent theological interpretation of the meaning and teleological thrust of the charismatic experience which generated them. The constant lesson of history is that the inner light is no substitute for sound theological training. Hence . . . whoever attempts to interpret the meaning and purpose of a charismatic experience bears the responsibility to seek the theological competence which an accurate interpretation demands.<sup>96</sup>

Unless the enthusiast is willing to listen to the voice of the church, tradition, scholarship, and scripture, he runs the risk of being unable to distinguish between his own inner voice and the voice of God. The mistake comes from limiting God to impressions only, and not recognizing that God speaks to us in other ways also. Unless this is realized, the fellowship aspect of the Christian life is destroyed. It is individual against individual without authority over any. The fellowship of the body of Christ demands that experience is a shared reality, not an individualistic one. Since no single member

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<sup>96</sup>Gelpi, p. 42.

can experience every aspect of the charismatic experience, each individual member is dependent on the body for the final interpretation of his own restricted (necessarily) individual experience. Thus, the interpretation of any aspect of charismatic experience is the responsibility of all not just one. It is in the best sense of the word, an ecclesiastical function. "No individual experience is self-interpreting, and no interpretation of religious experience is self-justifying."<sup>97</sup> Rather, the interpretation is a collective, historical, and reflective event in which the entire body participates.

(4) Characterization of their experience as the normative standard of faith for all others. In the fact that the enthusiast normalizes one specific charismatic experience as the sole and definitive norm for all authentic religious experience, he puts outside of his fellowship automatically all who do not share that same experience. History testifies to the fact that the enthusiast has uniformly been opposed to those charisms which were associated with the church or institutionalized religion he feels is secularized by its worldliness.<sup>98</sup> Unless the enthusiast recognizes the validity of other community-evaluated and approved experiences which, while different, point to the same reality, their basic structure of experience will remain divisive.

(5) Compartmentalize the totality, or perhaps better to say, the *whole* reality of experience while leaning toward a dualistic, gnostic tendency to separate the material and spiritual. Enthusiasm has

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<sup>97</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 189.

<sup>98</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 196.

typically regarded the body as a source of corruption and has opposed enthusiasm to rational reflection. Divisive enthusiasm has typically fed on the corruption it has found in the church. They familiarly picture themselves as the "true," or "invisible," or "spiritual" church in contra-distinction to the visible or institutionalized church, considering themselves too spiritual for organization and ecclesial structure. Because of this dualism, rational reflection and critical scholarship are shunned as fleshly and unspiritual endeavors; and, a simplistic, unintelligent theology comes to the fore with all types of disastrous consequences and conclusions dealing with "scholarship." It is not the normal give and take between mind and spirit which takes place that is under criticism, but the perpetual *habit* of putting mind and reflective thinking under the things of the Spirit in the name of an experience which, after all, is the product of evaluative reflection itself.

(6) One-sided view of emotions. The enthusiast, because he is dealing with feelings, only equates those feelings of joy and elation with the Spirit (but not usually feelings of sorrow or despair) and becomes frustrated when his concept of emotions does not correspond to the actuality of them. Can the enthusiast only be convinced that God has left him when he does not "feel" him? He expects too much of his religion in the way of verified results and is dissatisfied if his feelings do not run according to schedule. One lesson of enthusiasm is that too much preoccupation with the experiencing of the comforting gifts of the Spirit can, unless one exercises extreme care, lead one

to forget, or even deny the Giver. The enthusiast tends to reduce his religious life to an almost blind effort to recapture a certain kind of meaningful and joyous religious experience. Rather than finding a liberating force in his life, he finds himself chained to an experience someone else says is the norm for being "saved."<sup>99</sup>

(7) Charismania, or the exaggerated preoccupation with spiritual gifts. While charismania may be said to hold similarity to 1 and 4 above, yet it is different enough to mention separately. Charismania comprises attributing improper emphasis to the importance of the charisms. Edward O'Connor, C.S.C., points out that charismania is expressed in two forms: the first being the mentality which regards the charismatic as the sole or principal criterion of spiritual experience; and, the second, being the expectation that charismatic activity is to take the place of the human faculties or the ordinary or normal workings of church office.<sup>100</sup>

Some people want all sickness to be healed miraculously, and refuse to see a doctor or to take medicine. On similar grounds, others would like to see theological study and sermon preparation replaced by a kerygma of purely charismatic inspiration and institutional offices in the church . . . replaced by a purely charismatic leadership.<sup>101</sup>

Thus Spirit is set up against office as being more important rather than as equal in the functioning of the church.

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<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.

<sup>100</sup> Edward D. O'Connor, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1971), p. 256.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227.

These seven dangers, which have constantly recurred in the history of the church whenever charismatic-enthusiastic movements came onto the scene, serve as a serious reminder of the possible abuses which the present-day neo-Pentecostal movement must be aware of if it is not to follow in the footprints of history.

The question which now confronts one is: In the light of the movements examined, is there something inherently schismatic in their structure of experience as movements which were charismatic-enthusiastic in their orientation? The answer to this question must be "yes." It remains to be seen that charismatic experience which has structured its experience in the form of the above seven abuses could only but be schismatic. But the question also confronts us: Is there something inherently schismatic in all charismatic experience, even when structured according to the New Testament guidelines and when the possible abuses are considered and every effort made to avoid them? The answer to this question must be, "probably."

The question must be looked at from two sides. It may be seen that the defenders of "the institutionalized forms of the Christian charismatic experience have often been as narrow-mindedly divisive as the enthusiast,"<sup>102</sup> and this due to the fact that they wished to keep the unpredictable nature of the free Spirit's sway under administrative control, which provided for a less threatening situation.

It may be seen that the need to be concerned when people leave the church because its standards to them are legitimately too high is

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<sup>102</sup>Gelpi, pp. 195-96.

certainly different than when they leave it in search of a deeper spiritual life. It is time for the church to take stock of the situation and to evaluate what it is these people are seeking which they feel has gone out of the church. As Dale Bruner observes, though being himself opposed to separation from the church:

Schism was due more frequently than sometimes appreciated to men who were hungry and needy in spirit, deeply and legitimately dissatisfied with conventional Christianity, and finding no impression or expression for their hearts except in new Pentecostal fellowships. Their apologies for schism ought perhaps to be heard with contrition by those of us who are grateful to stand within the ecumenical and historical-denominational traditions.<sup>103</sup>

It may be asked, is schism in every situation to be seen as bad? The question of schism is certainly a complex one and its answer has many facets. Perhaps it may be seen to have a good side. What of its occurrence in the stand for conscience and truth, the protection of minorities, the defiance of arrogant authority, the break from dead tradition?<sup>104</sup> What of Luther and Wesley--is the cry of "Here I stand, I can do no other, God help me," the cry of the purposeful schismatic? Is the life work of one to spread "Scriptural Holiness" throughout the land the work of a fanatic? Both Luther and Wesley had no intention to leave or separate from the church, but they have not been the only ones who, for the sake of conscience, found themselves bound to do so.

Is it fair to say that charismatic experience is any more divisive than theology, or social emphasis on the Gospel, or

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<sup>103</sup>Bruner, p. 52.

<sup>104</sup>S. L. Greenslade, *Schism in the Early Church* (London: SCM Press, 1964), p. 53.



fundamentalism in biblical interpretation to liberalism? The church has many points on which to differ, the object before us is to bring those points to a minimum. The question that faces us, is, can that be done without compromising the principles involved? The history of the church has shown, as Bishop Gerald Kennedy has said, that "the hard work of the Kingdom is done year after year by the established church."<sup>105</sup> Notwithstanding this truth, would even the institution stand without the deep moving of the Spirit in its heart? The tension between Spirit and form dramatizes the fact that an adequate pneumatology must be structured with a cognizance and consciousness of the entire scope of the history of the church to draw into perspective the thought and response of the church concerning the concept of the Holy Spirit.

Whether the neo-Pentecostal experience of the Holy Spirit will prove to be schismatic or not depends on both those who embrace it and those who do not. It is, however, the opinion here that greater responsibility for the correct use and interpretation of spiritual realities must first rest with those who have experienced them. If the possible abuses are understood, if the structure of the experience is corresponded to its scriptural content, and if the church is open in true liberalism to different ways of experiencing God, perhaps the church need not face schism again but may worship in unity (though in diversity of experience) the one God of all. As Rev. S. L. Greenslade

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<sup>105</sup>Gerald Kennedy, as quoted in "Where is Religion's Place Today?" *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* (September 5, 1971), California Living Section, p. 10.

in his book on *Schism*, observes:

Blue-prints will not heal schisms; they must be faced as concrete historical entities in which dogmatic and constitutional issues are tangled up with historical memories and a host of personal feelings which need delicate handling. What an advance it would be towards the fuller and deeper unity of the Church if the common man no less than the statesman or the scholar, would scrutinize his own mind, would set himself to determine what he holds as principle and what by accident of history, would strenuously endeavor to weed out all pride and prejudice.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Greenslade, p. 57.

## CHAPTER IV

### A PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF DYSFUNCTIONAL STRUCTURES OF CHARISMATIC EXPERIENCE

#### A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will approach the charismatic experience through a psychological evaluation. This will involve a study of the relationship of inner, personal psychological constructs to their structure which are manifested in experience. This will be done in order to determine which types of psychological constructs are more conducive to forming functional structures, and which types lend themselves to forming dysfunctional structures.

##### 1. Definition of Terms

Functionality here has to do with the way one structures his experience into certain psychological constructs. Functionality is determined by the ability of an individual to form personal constructs which maintain the relationship between the spiritual reality experienced and its expression as it is structured in religious life. Dysfunctionality refers to any expression of an experience in a particular psychological construct whose expressed structure impairs or renders incomplete the essential integrity of that experience as a healthy spiritual encounter by destroying the relationship of the reality to its expression. An inner, personal construct refers to

that system an individual builds on the psychological level to support and give direction to the reality of a certain experience through the formation of a given structure. This means, for example, in relationship to the charismatic experience of tongue speaking, that it is a structure of experience which has been formed as one way of supporting and directing the spiritual reality that one has come into a direct encounter with God. The question that confronts one is: Is the form that expresses the reality a valid form? It is to be seen that the form (e.g., tongue speaking) is intimately tied to the personal psychological construct system (e.g., which so interprets tongues to be a valid expression of the reality and determines how it will be used)?

The forms, then, which derive from the charismatic experience are structured at the point of the psychological construct which interprets and directs the reality (the encounter with God) into certain structures (tongues). It is at this point that the functionality or dysfunctionality of the forms occur or are corrected. As George Kelly states:

From the standpoint of psychology of personal constructs, psychological disorders can be traced to characteristics of a person's construct system. There may be other bases of explanation but this is the one that seems most profitable . . . ; one can do something about a person's construction system.<sup>1</sup>

Practically, this analysis of psychological construct systems will be done in order that we may evaluate the reasons for the misuse of charismatic experience, the forms this misuse takes, and the steps

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<sup>1</sup>George A. Kelly, *The Psychology of Personal Constructs* (New York: Norton, 1955), II, 832.

needed to bring its psychological constructs and structures back into alignment with the spiritual reality they were meant to express.

## 2. Problems in Methodology

That such an analysis creates certain problems in methodology is evident. The first problem revolves around the elusive character of the religious organization of personality which is not open to direct observation. This will necessarily make any evaluation subjective at certain points. But it is hoped that an examination of the structures in which the experience is manifested will offer checks on the evaluation of the inner constructs and will offer a more objective evaluation on that basis. It is realized that similarities of structure do not always mean similar sources in different persons, especially when one cause can function differently in combination with other causes than when alone. What is hoped for here, though, is a presentation of the general characteristics of certain forms of psychological constructs and their expressed structures to determine which either lend themselves to be used dysfunctionally or are in themselves inherently dysfunctional.

These considerations turn us to a second problem. This problem concerns those who, following G. B. Cutten<sup>2</sup> consider charismatic

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<sup>2</sup>G. B. Cutten, *Speaking With Tongues* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927); see also, Anthony A. Hoekema, *What About Tongue Speaking?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966); and, J. N. Lapsley and J. H. Simpson, "Speaking in Tongues: Token of Group Acceptance and Divine Approval," *Pastoral Psychology*, XV:144 (May 1964); and, Wayne E. Oates, "A Socio-Psychological Study of Glossolalia" in *Glossolalia* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967).

experience in general and speaking in tongues in particular as being indicators of neurosis or psychosis in those individuals involved in the experience. Recent psychological literature, however, has disputed this assumption that the person who enters into a charismatic experience is any less maladjusted than one who does not. Virginia H. Hines concluded after studying three recent studies involving two classical and one neo-Pentecostal group that "in none of these studies has it been shown that Pentecostal glossolalics as a group are more psychotic or even neurotic than the control groups or the societal norms."<sup>3</sup>

However, it may be said that this should not imply that such psychosis or neurosis does not indeed play a part in dysfunctional aspects of the charismatic experience in an individual. Data collected<sup>4</sup> indicates that, though such disturbed individuals may become involved in the experience, there is no evidence that they exist in any greater proportion within this movement than within the organized

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<sup>3</sup>Virginia H. Hines, "Glossolalia: Functional Interpretation," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, VIII:2 (Fall 1969); see also, John P. Kildahl, *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972); and, William J. Samarin, *Tongues of Men and Angels* (New York: Macmillan, 1972); and, Alexander Alland, "Possession in a Revivalist Negro Church," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, I:2 (1961); and, Anton Boisen, "Economic Distress and Religious Experience: A Study of the Holy Rollers," *Psychiatry*, II (1939); and, A. W. Sadler, "Glossolalia and Possession: An Appeal to the Episcopal Study Commission," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, IV:1 (Fall 1964).

<sup>4</sup>United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. *Report of the Special Committee on the Work of the Holy Spirit to the 182nd General Assembly* (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1970), p. 15.

church.

If then, we are evaluating an experience whose origin and spiritual reality is not necessarily being doubted, and which occurs in individuals with no particular form of abnormal character disorders, what exactly is it we are trying to analyze? We are not evaluating the spirituality of the charismatic experience because there is something about it which is inherently dysfunctional; but, that the experience, as with all experience, may lend itself to such forms in people who are in every other respect, normal. This is to say that there is something in the matrix of all religious experience which lends itself to misuse even when those who experience it are sincere in their pursuit of it. It is hoped that this evaluation will help us to see what areas in this particular experience are liable to such misuse, and to learn how such abuse may be corrected.

Following William James, the dysfunctional aspects will be termed *theopathic*,<sup>5</sup> or the pathological expression of encounter with God. By theopathic is meant here any personal psychological construction which manifests itself in a structure of experience which is inadequate or inconsistent with the spiritual reality it attempts to signify. Theopathic here denotes an imbalance or improper emphasis of a particular aspect or element of religious devotion, practice, or experience. An experience here will be termed theopathic if its psychological constructs structure forms of experience which create

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<sup>5</sup>William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1961), p. 273.

undue excessive actions or reactions which adversely affect the development of healthy religious growth.

The aim of this paper is to treat this analysis of the charismatic experience in a general way rather than to focus on any one particular facet of the experience. This is to be done in order to cover as many types of general structures as possible. At times, however, where it would clarify a particular point, specific aspects of the experience (i.e., speaking in tongues) will be looked at in greater detail.

One last point must be emphasized before getting to the matter at hand. That is, all that is said concerning any theopathic aspect of the charismatic experience should not be taken as a closed case, but rather should be seen as only a tentative conclusion contingent upon new information and studies. That authentic religious experience and the pathological manifestations of it pose problems of correct identifications of each, as such, is pointed out by Wayne Oates when he states:

The fine line between creative, religious experience and mental illness are very difficult to locate, primarily because they are moving lines. The accusation of abnormality is hurled at persons whom we do not like, who are different from us, and who depart from the norms set down by us. The constant charge of madness seems to hang over the religious quest for a variety of reasons.<sup>6</sup>

Dr. Oates continues to say that the accusation of madness was even made concerning Jesus during his earthly ministry and although

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<sup>6</sup>Wayne E. Oates, *The Psychology of Religion* (Waco, TX: Word, 1973), p. 257.



history has vindicated Him, the question of the relationship between religious experience and mental illness has continued.<sup>7</sup> The conclusions made here are based with this realization in mind, and are put forth not in the sense of dogmatic, non-debatable facts, but rather as flexible, question-producing statements which will lead to further thinking and illumination of the problems involved.

### 3. Excess as a Criterion of Evaluation

"The fruits of religion . . . are, like all human products, liable to corruption by excess . . . we find that error by excess is exemplified by every saintly virtue."<sup>8</sup> So William James characterizes the main problem with all religious experience. One finds that excess is indeed the primary foundation stone upon which most dysfunctional personal psychological constructions of the charismatic experience rest. This excess is characterized by an improper emphasis on the spirituality it is attempting to express.

Excess, therefore becomes a type of criterion by which the validity of a construct system may be judged. This, however, presupposes certain *a priori* value judgments on what constitutes excess; and, therefore, the nature of excess needs to be defined at this point. The word itself is derived from the Latin *excessus*, and means a going out or beyond sufficiency and is characterized by extremity.<sup>9</sup> Excess

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<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup>James, p. 271.

<sup>9</sup>*Websters 3rd International Dictionary of the English Language* (Springfield, MA: Merriam, 1967), p. 792.

will then be defined for the purposes of this chapter as any extreme reaction or undue emphasis of any one aspect of a religious experience which results in a loss of responsible action based on reason which hinders the basic functionality of a person in his total life situation. Hence, any structure of experience which is built on an otherwise reasonable premise, but which is given undue emphasis so that one cannot function in a normal way, will be identified as excessive. For example,

When a person not only fasts according to shared and spiritually understood 'ground rules,' but refuses to eat at all because he fears God's punishment for eating, then that person has failed to function in a 'well' manner.<sup>10</sup>

It is seen, then, that excess is a criterion which is itself based upon an anterior premise. That premise is that religious experience is best expressed when it is a balance between all elements of a person's total psychological, societal, and individual life. It must be realized that this is a somewhat ambiguously defined balance. It is presumptuous, and possibly dangerous, to assume that this writer's or any other person's criterion will fit every situation so that excess can be identified by the above definition in every instance. This, at all times, involves something of an individual's own subjective value judgments on what constitutes balance or excess in another's life. However, objectivity of the criteria of excess and the *via media* is not established primarily so much on such subjective value judgments as it established on the observable actions

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<sup>10</sup>Wayne E. Oates, *When Religion Gets Sick* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970), p. 20.

(structures of experience) of a particular person. Thus, the determination of excess as such is an individualized criterion established on the ability of a person's construct system to maintain an integrative, functional relationship between all aspects of one's total life. It is when a particular aspect of one's experience becomes so emphasized that it forces out other, equally valid and important, areas of one's life that such an action may be defined as excessive and therefore unhealthy. The *Episcopal Study Commission on Glossolalia* states concerning glossolalia:

We do not suggest that Christians who speak in tongues therefore must be mentally disordered! We do point out, however, that glossolalia is not necessarily healthy or unwholesome in a given person's life. Its 'goodness' or 'badness' for an individual depends upon his ability to harmonize it with his other experience; that is, to be integrated as part of him as he lives in society . . . there is a significant difference between the person who can 'decide' to indulge in glossolalia and then withdraw from it at will, and the one whose conscious is overwhelmed by his unconscious until sufficient release has taken place. The latter hardly could be considered as in emotionally good health.<sup>11</sup>

As the different dysfunctional patterns of the personal constructs are analyzed it will be seen that they overlap at points because of their common rootage in excess. In order to keep this overlapping to a minimum these constructs will be arranged in an order which stresses their chronology of sequence as they might occur. It is not to be implied that all individuals would at any one time be characterized by all these dysfunctional forms but that it is likely that one who possesses those characteristics at the bottom of the

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<sup>11</sup>Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. *Study Commission on Glossolalia* (Diocese of California, 1963), p. 12.

sequence may have experienced those forms which preceded them, although not all to the same extent or in the same order. Those who have structured forms higher in the sequence are less liable to misuse the experience and are more open to restructuring dysfunctional constructions than those on the bottom of the sequence.

## B. DYSFUNCTIONAL CONSTRUCT SYSTEMS

### 1. Personal Maturity

The pivotal consideration around which the proper exercise of spiritual experience and the encounter with God depend is that of the basic maturity of a particular individual's personality. There is a difference between personal maturity and spiritual experience.<sup>12</sup> The problem occurs at the point at which one mistakenly identifies a certain form of spiritual experience to be a sign of personality maturation and assumes that the experience brings the necessary maturity to interpret, apply, and use it irregardless of the personality development of the individual. This results in a stereotyped pattern of experience which by-passes personality maturation and replaces it with structured experiences which may be psychologically unhealthy for that particular individual.

That is, because a meaningful experience occurs in a particular context (in this case the neo-Pentecostal milieu which is recognized by certain forms of worship) one associates the central spirituality of

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<sup>12</sup>Oates, *Psychology of Religion*, p. 87.

the experience to be synonymous with the structures realized in that context. Thus, because one experiences such a meaningful encounter in a group which prays in tongues or prays with their hands raised above their heads, he identifies speaking in tongues and hand raising as being necessarily the only proper structure in which the content of the experience can be expressed.<sup>13</sup> The problem focuses at the point where this transference occurs and which does not allow a person, through a natural maturation process, to see through his own study, prayer, and seeking, the way the content of his experience should be structured. Instead of the content informing its own natural structure through chronological development, predetermined structures (which may be authentic and meaningful forms to others) instead inform this content in patterns which for a particular individual's upbringing, personality, and spiritual development may not be right for that person at that moment, or not at all.<sup>14</sup>

Unless the individual who experiences such an encounter has a strong, mature personality, distortion can result. Morton T. Kelsey states in relationship to this question of tongue speaking that those who force an atmosphere of tongue speaking upon anyone as an only and necessary form of the charismatic experience may force an immature personality into real danger:

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<sup>13</sup>Kilian McDonnell, *Catholic Pentecostalism* (Pecos, NM: Dove, 1970), p. 14.

<sup>14</sup>W. J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972), p. 11.

There is real danger here, under these circumstances tongues can be brought to one who has a weak ego, and may become a contribution to psychological illness . . . the danger may well lie in having the experience at any age before one is aware of his own conflicts, so that tongues becomes a way to suppress inner problems rather than resolving them.<sup>15</sup>

Without a basic, stable, mature personality, the charismatic experience with God presents the possibility of such distortion between the content of the experience and its form. In the event of a stable, but not fully mature, personality one is faced with similar problems. The basic solution is the same for both cases--time for maturation. Time in which the person can form his experience in ways which are meaningful to him and which support the internal integrity of the content-significance of the experience. To simply take over worship forms of a particular movement as the only expressions of a particular encounter with God is to stunt the place of psychological constructions whose purpose is to adapt, synthesize and incorporate incoming experience into a meaningful pattern. Thus, to an already immature personality (which may only be chronological) the psychological work of maturation is not carried on in that area. The mature personality, on the other hand, will through its maturity approach the formation of structures of experience as the end result of psychological constructions which one establishes through reflection and testing to see if the structures it forms are consistent with the meaning they purport to express and are suitable to that individual's personality

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<sup>15</sup>Morton T. Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1968), p. 224.

development.<sup>16</sup> The mature personality will drop or adapt to his own background meaningful expressions of the charismatic experience rather than form the content of the experience according to the structures of another person's experience, no matter how significant they may be to that other individual.

## 2. Approach-avoidance

This term is used of the psychological construct by which one uses the charismatic experience as a spiritual shortcut to real spiritual maturity. In it one is caught up in a world of imagined instant spiritual maturity as he avoids the disciplines normally needed to achieve such maturity. As Wayne Oates says: "The basic hungers of a person are fertile sources of fantasy and temptations to take shortcuts to turn fantasies into reality without work or discipline."<sup>17</sup> Oates goes on to show that this was exactly the choice Jesus had to make when he was tempted by Satan in the wilderness. The exact nature of the three temptations was the psychological temptation to indulge in the fantasy of shortcuts to satisfaction.<sup>18</sup>

The charismatic experience lends itself to such an approach-avoidance syndrome. As charismatic experience is seen as a direct encounter with God, the temptation is close to equate a particular form of religious expression as the only and final expression of the

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<sup>16</sup>George A. Kelly, p. 848.

<sup>17</sup>Oates, *Psychology of Religion*, p. 188.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

experience. In the case of tongues this is an especially serious question. Morton T. Kelsey comments:

Closely related to these reactions is the danger that tongue speaking can become a shortcut to religious and psychological growth which stunts it instead of giving full measure. If the experience is seen as the center of Christian life, then Christ, in whom no one experience takes precedence, is displaced as the center, and Christian wholeness gets lost. Growing toward Christian maturity means shedding of skin, and when experience is used as a substitute for this work, for the patience and suffering of growth, people get caught in tongue speaking and never go further.<sup>19</sup>

This problem derives from the mistaken psychological construction which formulates an emotional experience in terms of a present moment of time rather than as a dimension of ongoing time in growth which serves as a sign that something new is happening in one's life.<sup>20</sup> The construction is based on the mistaken assumption that if speaking in tongues is a direct encounter with God (which it could be) then the experience itself is an ultimate and perfected expression of that encounter. Thus, this being true, speaking in tongues represents an instant way of experiencing God. The truth is, though, that while speaking in tongues may be a direct way of encountering God it is certainly not an exclusive or a perfected way of so doing. The content-significance of the charismatic experience is not to bring a person into immediate spirituality but it is to be a means by which one goes toward the goal of spiritual maturity.

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<sup>19</sup>Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking*, p. 225.

<sup>20</sup>Edward D. O'Connor, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1971), p. 217.



The danger here is especially real that due to such a tight construction system any experience which threatens the form, by inference, also threatens the content because the two have been confused as being one.<sup>21</sup> In the charismatic experiences of healing or prophecy each situation which fails to materialize as expected undermines the spirituality the forms were meant to convey. This occurs because the content was seen to be as something intrinsic to the form rather than the form as merely being a conveyor of the content. The personal conclusion, according to this construction system, is not far away; that, if repeatedly one's anticipations fail to actualize (prophecy which has not come to pass, or healing not realized) there is something wrong with the spirituality rather than the form in which one has structured it. When the breakdown of reality to imagined fantasy occurs, the individual's construction system may break down and with it a possibly significant spiritual experience. A particular charismatic expression may be a meaningful experience for such a person; but, because he stays with that experience, he never goes on to a deeper understanding of the spirituality which the particular form he holds expresses. It becomes apparent that he does not have the type of undergirding structure that would enable him to meet the demands of a crisis in his faith and as his construction system collapses so does a possible authentic spirituality.

To combat this destruction of imagined fantasy which is brought on by the approach-avoidance scheme of life to reality, a

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<sup>21</sup>Kelly, p. 849.

person may form unhealthy, unventilated psychological constructions which constrict rather than free his spiritual quest. George Kelly comments:

Consider the person who faces the changing scene of life with nothing but tight constructions. Every prediction, every anticipation, must be precise and exact. Every element which he construes must fit the context of its construct without any possibility of being questioned. There are no loose fits which might let anxiety seep in. The whole structure is designed to be anxiety-tight.<sup>22</sup>

The question of whether such a life is worth the trouble it entails is open to question, but it is a constant threat in the light of the charismatic experience. A religious experience which cannot flex with the complexities and constantly changing situations of life will soon ossify and die. This is not to say that the charismatic experience is intrinsically inflexible and is a shortcut to true spiritual maturity. However, the experience can lend itself to this type of construction system and ultimately can only bring disappointment if it is so used. It will be seen, as one proceeds further down the following personal constructs, that each one is a basic defense in support of the tight construction system. As a person becomes more involved in the approach-avoidance schema he must constantly find other ways to support it or he will be caught in a breakdown of his system. Each succeeding construction system pushes the individual further away from the total community of faith into his own isolated world.

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<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*

### 3. Spiritual Pride

The quest for religious significance is certainly a paradox. Just because the encounter with God offers one of the highest expressions of human fulfillment it also presents one of the highest dangers for abuse and selfishness.

If it (the religious quest) is entered lightly, or without the right preparation, or for the wrong motives, the results are likely to be quite unpleasant, for the individual is open to becoming inflated by what he finds. The power which is available can then be used for ego ends rather than for God.<sup>23</sup>

The way in which one forms certain personal constructs which involve spiritual pride is insidious. As one is caught up in the emotion of the charismatic experience, he may feel (and he may in actuality have) a deeper and closer relationship with God. From this significant experience one infers a sense of spirituality which he may not have had before. The danger lies at the point at which this becomes a relative spirituality. Instead of a new spiritual relationship with God being the center of the charismatic experience, one may tend to look at himself as being more spiritual in relationship to others. It is interesting to note the comments on this type of spirituality made by St. John of the Cross 400 years ago:

. . . There often comes to them . . . a certain kind of secret pride, whence they come to have some degree of satisfaction with their works and with themselves . . . They condemn others in their hearts when they see that they have not the kind of devotion which they themselves desire . . . when their spiritual

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<sup>23</sup>Morton T. Kelsey, *Encounter with God* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1972), p. 172.

master, such as confessors and superiors, do not approve of their spirit and behaviour (for they are anxious that all they do shall be esteemed and praised), they consider that they do not understand them, or that . . . their confessors are themselves not spiritual.<sup>24</sup>

Wayne Oates points out that not all blame is to be placed on the individual himself. But rather, that (especially with religious leaders) when a group of people pressure one to assume a certain role, fictitious goals produce a pathological religion.<sup>25</sup> Hence, the person's own pride and the pressure of the group combine together to make a person act in a certain way which fosters a sense of super-spirituality. The result is an overbearing, unmovable "special agent" of God who tries to convince everyone of his "correct" and only interpretation of the way men may experience God. This aspect will be covered more fully in (6) below.

This individual has established a psychological construction system which is based on a mistaken assumption that spirituality is a relative rather than an individual dimension. He looks at others in relationship to himself. If they do not experience what he has felt, or have not sought what he has desired, their spiritual level is seen to be less than his. Therefore, if one does not speak in tongues one has not really had a true spiritual encounter with God. The point is, that spirituality is an individual relationship with God--not a relative relationship to others. The charismatic cannot say "because I have

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<sup>24</sup>John of the Cross, *Dark Night of the Soul* (Garden City: Image, 1959), pp. 39-40.

<sup>25</sup>Oates, *When Religion Gets Sick*, p. 138.

spoken in tongues I am a better Christian than another." He can only say, "Because I have spoken in tongues *I am* perhaps a better Christian than *I was*." Pride can have no place in the charismatic experience if it is to maintain its central integrity as an encounter with God. When such pride takes over, the charismatic experience becomes only a cover for the exaltation of ego needs by persons with a low self image.<sup>26</sup>

As mentioned above, the second factor involved in such spiritual pride of group expectation pressure can push a person into the same type of situation if he allows his ego needs to dominate over the essential preeminence of the relationship with God.

#### 4. Spiritual Avarice

Spiritual avarice, or the insatiable quest after religious experience, plays an important bridge between spiritual pride through fixation to fanaticism. The psychological construction which fosters spiritual avarice is, at first look, quite innocent. This particular construct is built around the premise that the greater the evidences of spiritual gifts or experiences proves the greater evidence of God's power in one's life. While this may be actually true, the theopathic aspects of charismatic experience is a search for spiritual gifts as ends rather than as means to grace. This is similar to the situation of which Paul spoke in the church at Corinth. Many were not satisfied with the spirituality they had received and were showing signs of desiring the spiritual experiences of others, which caused serious

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<sup>26</sup>Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking*, p. 224.

strife and contention.<sup>27</sup>

In the contemporary charismatic movement a similar danger is present. Whenever a hierarchy of importance of spiritual gifts is established there will be the tendency for the grasping after that which one does not possess.<sup>28</sup> A symptom of this is those persons who are constantly going from place to place, conference to conference, never having quite filled their appetite to learn some new spiritual truth or to experience some new spiritual gift.<sup>29</sup> They are never quite satisfied with what they have; but, they need to seek yet another experience in order that they can add one more scalp to their spiritual belt.

#### 5. Fixation

Fixation occurs when one's personal construct system interprets the charismatic experience from its form rather than its content. In doing this one will falsely interpret the structures of the experience for the content of them. One becomes so fixated or absorbed on a tiny aspect of the experience that he interprets the whole of it by that small part rather than the other way around. If this is carried to an extreme position, those fixated areas may contradict the very content

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<sup>27</sup>I Corinthians 12-14.

<sup>28</sup>Donald L. Gelpi, *Pentecostalism* (New York: Paulist Press, 1971), p. 195.

<sup>29</sup>Adrian Van Kamm, *Personality Fulfillment in the Spiritual Life* (Wiles-Barre, PA: Dimension, 1966), pp. 143f.

they were meant to convey.<sup>30</sup> "In idolatry the essential meaning gets so lost in concretizations that these finally become hostile to the original mystical experiences . . ."<sup>31</sup> The charismatics, similarly, face this problem when they implicitly equate a limited aspect (e.g., tongues) of the experience with the whole of it and destroy the inherent integrity of the experience. The problem, however, does not lie in the experience *per se* but the way it has been interpreted and structured.

This type of tight construction stereotypes patterns of thinking and incapacitates a person from being able to accommodate new insights, or allow diversification, in religious forms.

Fixed ideas become substitutes for a vital faith which asks for help in its lack of belief. These fixed ideas inhibit the person's relationship to other people and muffle, distort, and seal off communication with them.<sup>32</sup>

That this then forms a vicious cycle is seen in the words of Adrian Van Kaam, C.S.Sp.:

. . . It is not the spirituality which is fundamentally perverse but something in the way in which I live this spirituality. If I prematurely identify my unwholesome religious attitudes with the principles of a sound spirituality, I will be tempted to cut myself off from the traditional sources which I need to nourish my religious growth.<sup>33</sup>

One cannot say that specialization is in itself wrong for we see it in almost every aspect of modern living. But when a particular

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<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 108.

<sup>31</sup>Abraham H. Maslow, *Religious Values and Peak Experiences* (New York: Viking Press, 1971), p. 24.

<sup>32</sup>Wayne E. Oates, *Religious Factors in Mental Illness* (New York: Association Press, 1955), p. 107.

<sup>33</sup>Van Kamm, p. 115.

aspect of a religious experience becomes so overemphasized that it forces fellow believers away and violates other, equally biblical and theological, principles the question of its validity must be challenged.

The problem that is manifest in fixation is that a specific spiritual experience should not limit the possibilities of other significant ways of expressing the same spirituality. One may certainly break away from tradition and custom to claim a significant charismatic experience, but to do so is at the same time to lose the richness of the tradition and customs which symbolize other significant and equally meaningful experiences.

## 6. Fanaticism

Fanaticism is a psychological construct which finds its birth in misplaced devotion. William James, in discussing devotion comments: "When unbalanced, one of its vices is called fanaticism. Fanaticism . . . is loyalty carried to a convulsive extreme."<sup>34</sup> Again, fanaticism as well as other dysfunctional constructs find their origin in improper emphasis. The point at which this devotion becomes fanaticism is where a person's response to a particular spiritual experience becomes more important and consuming than the experience itself. The line between the two is thin, indeed, and the temptation to cross the line into fanaticism is always close to the spiritual individual for that reason.

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<sup>34</sup>James, p. 271.



Fanaticism is the outgrowth of fixation and is the sign of the compulsive neurotic who is attracted to being overly compulsive in the way he approaches spiritual experience. To this person a situation can only be right or wrong, white or black, with no variations. The moment someone deviates from his particular setup of spiritual experience, that person is proscribed as being un-spiritual. The charismatic movement is liable to such fanaticism if it is not aware of this pitfall. When one believes that the experience he has had is an indication of a direct encounter with God he is at the door of fanaticism if he feels that God deals with everyone as God did with him. Morton T. Kelsey, commenting on this problem in tongue speaking, says:

The experience is so meaningful to them that they assume it should be experienced by everyone else. They become inflated by the experience, proceeding to judge everyone else who has not spoken in tongues as religiously inferior and trying to force other people into the experience. This is spiritual disaster.<sup>35</sup>

Because of the direct nature of his encounter with God, the fanatic is likely to confuse his own emotions and ego needs with the "Word" of God. He defends his irrational behavior, his aggressiveness, and his fanaticism by the catch-phrase, "The Lord told me." Certainly one is defenseless against this type of argument as this type of person will not, or cannot accept the retraction of anything that "God" has spoken.

The problem that is manifest in fanaticism is that such a person is almost incapable of being made sensitive to the fact that

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<sup>35</sup>Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking*, p. 223.

the devotion of others can be expressed in other categories of experience unlike his own. The outcome of such fanaticism is the eventual withdrawal of the individual from those who differ in their appreciation of his spiritual experience. This is realized in the construct which brings dissociation.

## 7. Dissociation

Dissociation is a psychological construct which brings excessive self-centrifugal tendencies to the point where disintegration of the personality from conflicting sources brings disintegration of relationships or the dissociation of the individual from those who hold different viewpoints.<sup>36</sup>

Dissociation has its origin in fanaticism. As the fanatic becomes more and more tied to certain types of behavior patterns and forms of religious expressions he begins to simultaneously dissociate from religious forms which are not in line with his particular view. This dissociation from religious forms also means dissociation from those people who hold those forms and the logical outgrowth of such dissociation is a schismatic personality. By dichotomizing into "spiritual" and "un-spiritual," a vicious cycle is maintained. As Abraham Maslow comments:

. . . dichotomizing pathologizes (and pathology dichotomizes). Isolating two interrelated parts of a whole from each other, parts that need each other, parts that are truly 'parts'

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<sup>36</sup>Rufus M. Jones, *New Studies in Mystical Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1928), p. 52.

and not wholes, distorts them both, sickens and contaminates them. Ultimately, it even makes them non-viable.<sup>37</sup>

Thus, as long as the schismatic personality so dichotomizes, he pathologizes his experience and as he pathologizes he further dichotomizes, until dissociation from the conflict is the only way left for him to go. This type of dissociation should not be confused with monastic separation which has certain culturally sanctioned aspects. As Wayne Oates comments:

From a more distantly clinical point of view, however, the withdrawal of a person from reality is a psychiatrically serious matter quite differently motivated from much that would normally appear under the name of monasticism.<sup>38</sup>

This dissociation, then, has serious ramifications to the individual and ultimately to his place within the church and his relationship to other individuals. Through this person's rejection of others, another vicious cycle is begun when his lack of acceptance of others brings a return in kind of diminished acceptance and he is further pushed into a world of isolation. Van Kamm states that such limited acceptance pushes one back to a lower, and essentially egoistic, level of personality which is characterized by the "mere satisfaction of my needs without regard for social, moral, or personal consequences, be they good or bad."<sup>39</sup>

Thus, through this particular psychological construct the break

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<sup>37</sup>Maslow, p. 13.

<sup>38</sup>Oates, *Religious Factors in Mental Illness*, pp. 132-33.

<sup>39</sup>Van Kamm, p. 143.

from the religious community is accomplished. Historically, it may be seen that enthusiastic movements when they have reached this stage are divisive in their structure and schismatic in their nature.<sup>40</sup>

In light of the seven problems enumerated above, the major question to be asked here is how charismatic experience may avoid such dysfunctional psychological constructs and instead produce a balanced, healthy encounter with God. It is the opinion of this writer that the charismatic experience can offer more fuel to dysfunctional constructs than it can for building functional ones. That this is so is not meant as an admission that charismatic experience should not be experienced or investigated as a possibility of experience. It is to say, however, that charismatic experience is no plaything to be entered into lightly or an assurance that its content will be structured automatically in functional forms. Morton T. Kelsey in answering the question about glossolalia, "But isn't it dangerous?" says:

There is no doubt that glossolalia is dangerous . . . It would be foolish to conclude that there are no dangers in tongue speaking. To say that glossolalia is a spiritual experience, a direct encounter with God, does not mean that it is a safe, cushioned ride to the next playground.<sup>41</sup>

The all too common assumption that once a person becomes a Christian "everything in his life will be all right" has perhaps contributed to the dangers involved in religious experience in general, and charismatic experience in particular. It is a sobering thought

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<sup>40</sup>R. A. Knox, *Enthusiasm* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), p. 1.

<sup>41</sup>Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking*, p. 227.

to realize that religion is not just an amusement to be entered into lightly. It can be a powerful, as well as dangerous, experience and is no safeguard against abuse in those with disorganized personalities.

It is commonly assumed that the Christian experience is an integrating experience; however, the process of regeneration does not necessarily eliminate any personality difficulty an individual has. A disorientated life is not magically brought into focus when a man becomes a Christian. Nor does the infilling of the Holy Spirit necessarily bring such a change. Such experience does not necessarily change a disorientated neurotic into a well-integrated extrovert.<sup>42</sup>

### C. CRITERIA OF EVALUATION FOR CONSTRUCT SYSTEMS

Recognizing this situation will eliminate certain errors that could be made in reference to the selection of criteria for evaluation of construct systems. It is, therefore, not the experience which is inherently dysfunctional but rather, it is the way different persons build psychological systems around the experience. " . . . unhealthy religion is primarily the unhealthy use of religion. Used unhealthily religion develops into psychologically unhealthy practices."<sup>43</sup>

Since, then, it is the structure of the experience that is being evaluated, we may proceed to put forth evaluative criteria on this basis. These criteria will attempt to evaluate constructs as to their capability of communicating the content of the spirituality which is the direct encounter with God.

In putting forth these criteria of evaluation of structures

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<sup>42</sup> *United Presbyterian Report on the Work of Holy Spirit*, p. 15.

<sup>43</sup> George Christian Anderson, *Your Religion* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1970), p. 31.

one must constantly be aware of the temptation to believe that such criteria are absolutely binding in every situation. As Walter Houston Clark comments:

. . . I wish to make clear . . . that it is the balance and harmonious interaction between rational and nonrational that keeps religion alive. Since both institutions and individuals grow, and times change, this balance changes with the needs of the times. Consequently, there is no fixed formula that . . . can serve as a prescription to be relied on to guide us in every detail.<sup>44</sup>

This is true because religious experience is dynamic and progressive and not a static state. This would mean, also, that one is not comparing one individual to another but rather what is being evaluated is the degree to which there is improvement in each individual in the fulfilling of religious functions by the constructs he forms.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, a religious construction system must be able to adequately sustain the content-meaning it is attempting to express. Thus, we are dealing with certain psychological construction systems as to their functionality as conveyors of religious meaning in the charismatic experience as a direct encounter with God. Those constructions which do not support the content-meaning so understood are to be seen as inadequate and need to be restructured or discarded.

*Criteria No. 1--Is the experience a cohesive rather than a disintegrative force?*

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<sup>44</sup>Walter Houston Clark, *Religious Experience* (Springfield, IL: Thomas, 1973), p. 11.

<sup>45</sup>Henry Nelson Wieman, *Normative Psychology of Religion* (New York: Crowell, 1935), p. 372.

Is the experience so absorbing that it breaks a person off from regular-day life and becomes an essentially isolated and self-interpreted experience? When such experience becomes self-validating and self-interpreted it loses the ability to determine the functionality of its personal constructs. As it becomes self-interpreting it no longer pays attention to other forms or evaluations. The testing of the functionality of constructs cannot, therefore, be self-evaluating but must occur within the context of other experiences also. As Georgia Harkness comments:

Yet such a vision of God as the mystic experiences must be tested, not analytically while it is in process but in retrospect as one moves back to the light of every day, by its coherence with all the factors in human living which can be discerned through other channels.<sup>46</sup>

Indeed, to so maintain such a self-supportive and self-interpreted mystical experience, Harkness goes on to say: "would be psychologically disruptive, easily merging into psychosis."<sup>47</sup> If the experience dissociates one from reality into a purely or semi-isolated world it may be held to be dysfunctional.

*Criteria No. 2--Is the experience a voluntary or a compulsive expression in the life of the one who experiences it?*

Wayne Oates calls this the "compulsive-volitional continuum."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Georgia Harkness, *Mysticism* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1973), p. 30.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup>Oates, *Religious Factors in Mental Illness*, p. 100.

That is, does the need of the experience arise out of a compulsion to it, or does it arise out of a conscious voluntary choice? It is apparent that any experience which arises out of a compulsion risks the danger of being just that--compulsive. When compulsion is the origin instead of a voluntary decision, an individual can become a compulsive neurotic who identifies and thus legitimizes his own compulsive tendencies with the working of the Holy Spirit.

He becomes hooked on a certain experience or action which can be triggered by the right words or even a song. It can be anything from a 'holy Jerk' to a peculiar moan or groan . . . . Dealing with these people can be frustrating. In every situation it is the Holy Spirit Himself who is thought to have caused the jerk or prompted the dance, etc.<sup>49</sup>

On the other hand, self-determination or the voluntary decision to address any particular religious experience not only has healthy psychiatric value but also is an obvious safeguard against the dangers involved in overreaction in compulsive religious experiences.<sup>50</sup>

*Criteria No. 3--Is the experience flexible enough to find a healthy balance of expression in varying situations?*

Wayne Oates describes the spiritually mature person as one who is:

. . . not fixed, stereotyped, patternized, and enslaved by any one kind of relatedness. He can be aggressive when the time and place calls for it. But he is not aggressive in all relationships . . . the spiritually mature person is one who can take the prerequisites of given situations and fulfills the relationships he ought to fulfill.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Doug Wead, *Catholic Pentecostals* (Carol Stream, IL: Creation House, 1972), p. 93.

<sup>50</sup>Oates, *Religious Factors in Mental Illness*, p. 100.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 145.



To a person who does not have such a healthy balance and is already characterized by overemotionalism the charismatic experience may lead to the destruction of necessary emotional control. The line between a healthy balance of the material and spiritual is difficult,

. . . but mature religion, with its emphasis constantly *balanced* between the material and the spiritual, is our best insurance against these dangers. It leads away from madness to psychological maturity and sanity.<sup>52</sup>

Such a balance lowers the possibility of such an individual reacting in such extremes as are characterized by spiritual avarice, fixation-addiction and fanaticism, etc.

If these three criteria are carefully applied by an individual seeking to evaluate any particular charismatic experience, it will be seen that the closer the experience meets these criteria the less danger there will be of improper use of the experience.

#### D. RESTRUCTURING OF CONSTRUCT SYSTEMS

The problem which now confronts us is that of those who have improperly structured the content of the charismatic experience in any of the forms enumerated above. As has been said already, the process of correction of abuses in such experience becomes more difficult as one moves toward the eventual dissociation of the individual. At later stages he is not usually open to help of any kind. Prevention, then, must ideally come with the initial introduction of the individual into the charismatic experience. The church must responsibly take the

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<sup>52</sup>Kelsey, *Encounter with God*, p. 173.

position of providing such preventive teaching. If it does not, or if it ignores the charismatic experience until such abuses occur, it probably deserves more blame than those who look to the church for such proper teaching, but not finding it, go on their own with resultant abuses arising.<sup>53</sup> If the church will not take the time to study and offer a place of understanding and fellowship to other believers who have entered the charismatic experience, who is to be blamed when abuses arise? To be sure, abuses can and probably will arise even in the context of the total community, but the chances for understanding and fellowship being destroyed are certainly less in that situation than with each segment going its own way.

Given the situation of abusive tendencies in an individual involved in charismatic experience, how does one bring about correction? The obvious solution, in the context of what we have been discussing, is that of the restructuring of personal construct systems which better express the spirituality the person has encountered. That this can be difficult is stated by George Kelly, who says:

The revision of constructs is not always easy to accomplish. It usually starts with the invalidation of a part of one's construct repertory.<sup>54</sup>

How that invalidation occurs and how one reacts to it depends closely upon the personality of the individual so confronted.

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<sup>53</sup>Larry Christenson, *A Message to the Charismatic Movement* (Minneapolis: Dimension, 1972), p. 74.

<sup>54</sup>Kelly, p. 847.

This stage in the revision sequence may follow a dilation of the field of elements . . . If, however, the dilation presents the person with a situation he cannot handle, he can do one of three things. He can live with his anxiety for a time; he can crawl back into his shell for a time; or he can immediately start doing something about his constructs.<sup>55</sup>

Ideally, the latter course of action is the most desirable. This can be accomplished, according to Kelly, by restructuring constructs to involve circumspection which utilizes propositional constructs.<sup>56</sup> Here one reorganizes his perceptions in the light of the invalidation which he has experienced in the abusive use of his experience. That such a reorganization is dependent on a relatively healthy personality is seen by Lloyd H. Ahlem who comments:

Many people's perceptions are so rigid that they automatically refuse to recognize serious problems. In fact, some persons no longer understand that they are unaware. They have experienced so much stress in the past that their minds block out the truth, making no attempts at reorganization. The psychologically able individual usually reorganizes his thinking to account fully for the problems thrust upon him. He deals with them rationally, sensing all the related emotions. Then he resumes his normal experience.<sup>57</sup>

## E. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, it seems, we have come around full circle. We started out with the relationship of personal maturity to the proper use of spiritual experience, and we have ended our discussion with it.

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<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 848.

<sup>57</sup>Lloyd H. Ahlem, *Do I Have to Be Me?* (Glendale, CA: Regal, 1973), pp. 117-18.

Conclusions must surely be viewed only tentatively, as the neo-Pentecostal movement is so new a phenomena that an evaluation of its functionality or dysfunctionality as an expression of religious encounter is yet to be seen. It may be concluded, however, that the experience itself is not what is being evaluated. Rather, what is being evaluated is the way the experience is interpreted and used by personal construct systems. As has been earlier stated, it is not only charismatic experience which may be structured dysfunctionally. Rather, all experience, in any area of life, may take on dysfunctional forms. It remains to be seen, though that religious experience does not assume dysfunctional patterns more often than other forms of experience. Perhaps religious experience will always run the danger of abuse. Even the criteria and evaluations made herein do not assure that the experience will be without problems or even that the criteria will be recognized as valid. The hope is only that they will provide guidelines for functional use and a challenge to examine one's religious experience and the forms it takes. Surely, it must be realized that the encounter of God which is a gift of grace is not an inherently theopathic experience. However, as long as humans remain human, even the best of gifts can be misdirected. Or, as William James states it:

The plain fact is that men's minds are built, as has been often said, in water-tight compartments. Religious after a fashion they yet have many things in them besides their religion, and unholy entanglements and associations inevitably obtain.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>James, p. 269.

## CHAPTER V

### AN EVALUATION AND RESPONSE TO THE NEO-PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT AND CHARISMATIC EXPERIENCE IN THE CHURCH

This chapter will deal with the response of the church to charismatic experience and the neo-Pentecostal movement. This chapter will attempt to bring together the biblical, historical and psychological areas which have been examined in order to consider the problems involved in evaluating the place of the neo-Pentecostal experience within the church. From this analysis different guidelines will be presented which the church and the neo-Pentecostal movement may need to follow in order to bring unity of faith and diversity of experience into the context of a single community.

That such an evaluation of the neo-Pentecostal experience will not be without problems is borne out by the fact that the experience which forms the substance of any individual's experience goes beyond what anyone can understand and consolidate within the confines of the experience itself. Thus,

For this reason we are constantly working up hill . . . seeking to understand and interpret what has already happened to us; and more often than not the implications of present experience come to light only decades and even centuries later.<sup>1</sup>

As true as this is, however, the fact is that we cannot wait decades to interpret the implications of the present charismatic

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<sup>1</sup>John E. Smith, *The Analogy of Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p. 25.

movement. Realizing the limitations involved in interpreting so new a religious experience should not deter us from so doing. We must be satisfied, if not with the full implications, at least with all that can now be inferred, for only in so doing can we hope to maintain the integrity of the content-meaning of the experience as an experience of encounter with God. Because the charismatic experience demands a response based upon understanding, this means that an investigation into its structure is necessary for the intelligent direction or re-direction of its form.

To establish guidelines for the intelligent direction of the form of the neo-Pentecostal experience for the future, its present structure will now be examined. The areas where possible abuse to the integrity of the experience and points where schism presents a possibility will be looked at first. Along with the sources cited, material for this section comes from this writer's extensive interaction with neo-Pentecostal charismatic groups, both Protestant and Catholic.

#### A. AREAS OF WEAKNESS IN THE NEO-PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT

##### 1. Cultural Baggage

The first area which poses a problem comprises those, who, while remaining in their particular denomination as they embrace the charismatic experience, adopt along with it concepts and practices which are more or less alien to the traditions of their own churches. The Catholic theologian, Kilian McDonnell, calls such a transference

"cultural baggage."<sup>2</sup> The danger is that the cultural forms of religious expression common in the Pentecostal denominations, from which the neo-Pentecostals derive much of their thought, is not necessarily an equal correlative to the culture of the neo-Pentecostal. This particular culturization of the Pentecostal churches was in itself a derivative of American revivalism, which was characterized by certain terminology and theological presuppositions. This was a purely natural and historical situation. The Pentecostals surrounded an essentially valid experience with the religious style, culture, and theology of American revivalism because it was in that context that the Holiness movement experienced the baptism of the Spirit. In the context of that particular historical, socio-cultural, context it sustained the validity of its own particular form. One does not want to infer that the socio-cultural milieu of the traditional Pentecostal church is of a lower level than any other religious culture. The point is, though, that it is of a decidedly *different* type. What for the classical Pentecostalist was once, removed, culturally, is now to the contemporary neo-Pentecostalist, twice or three times, culturally removed. The neo-Pentecostal movement must realize, therefore, that this "cultural baggage," while perhaps having validity in the classical Pentecostal cultural and theological tradition, does not have absolute or transferable validity in another tradition. When these cultural limitations are not realized, one finds a nineteenth century cultural-

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<sup>2</sup>Kilian McDonnell, *Catholic Pentecostalism* (Pecos, NM: Dove, 1970), p. 14.

ized term or custom trying to explain a twentieth century experience in which the interpretation breaks down because of the disparity between the cultural milieus. Cultural baggage is then significantly related to the theological interpretation of the charismatic experience in the neo-Pentecostal movement. As Dr. W. J. Hollenweger, the former evangelistic secretary for the World Council of Churches, observes:

In most instances the experience of the Baptism of the Spirit is described in the thought categories of Pentecostal doctrine and is therefore in danger of being exposed to all the misunderstandings of Pentecostal doctrine. The danger is all the greater when the philosophical (the division of the phenomena of the world into natural and supernatural) and exegetical (the acceptance of Acts as a normative protocol of the first normative Christianity) presuppositions remain unclarified.<sup>3</sup>

Hence, neo-Pentecostals risk the danger not only of adopting the cultural (emotional) environment of the classical Pentecostals which is not their own, but also the thought categories of a fundamentalist milieu. The danger here, as is clear in classical fundamentalism, is that such culturized spiritual experience destroys its integrity by confusing the content-meaning of the experience with external (and most likely non-applicable) forms. If the neo-Pentecostals are not careful, the particular cultural-theological thought and forms of the classical Pentecostals will take the place of the religious presence which such thought and forms at one time sought to foster and protect in a different tradition. Thus, the customs of a different

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<sup>3</sup>W. J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972), p. 16.



tradition isolate themselves from the new circumstances and contradict the very presence to which they at one time pointed.

When the attempt is made to transfer the "cultural baggage" of classical Pentecostalism to another theological tradition, characteristic problems emerge. When a Methodist, for example, in his tradition begins to raise his hands in prayer, shake and fall to the ground while shouting "Praise the Lord," it is likely he will be misunderstood (to say the least). The problem is not so much the question of the external manifestations *per se*, but their validity in a different cultural and traditional setting than what in which such forms were first structured.

These manifestations may be legitimate expressions of the encounter with God in the Methodist tradition. The point is, that is something which is not determined by the wholesale borrowing of Pentecostal forms of worship, but the contextual evaluation of forms of worship within that tradition. Unless this is understood, the content-significance of the spiritual gifts will be clouded by a once authentic, but now misplaced, external form. When it is rejected in one of the traditional denominations, the spiritual baby is thrown out with the misplaced form of the bath water. Since these forms do not have any special religious significance in the mainline church traditions, they create an atmosphere of unfamiliarity which irritates and provokes suspicion. The neo-Pentecostalist is alienated by this reaction from his fellow church members and is no longer able to effectively function in his communion of faith. He believes he is being rejected because

of his neo-Pentecostalism charismatic experience of God, while in fact it is not his spirituality that is being rejected but the "cultural baggage" which he erroneously thought was a transferable element in his experience.<sup>4</sup>

In order for abuse to be minimized in this area and schism to be avoided, some hard thinking must be done both by the neo-Pentecostals and the traditional church. As well as hard thinking, it must be creative thought. A deep look into the problems of culturized forms of experience must be considered by the neo-Pentecostals in the context of the richness of their own tradition. New responses, which become authentic means of expressing their experience, must be formed. The traditional church must be patient and loving, giving all the help it can to the interpreting and acceptance of charismatic Christians in their own tradition. Only as both work together will the variety of experience become one in unity under one faith.

## 2. Weak Theology

A second area which comprises a problem is related to the problem of cultural baggage mentioned above. At present, there appears to be a disturbing lack of real theological concern among those in the neo-Pentecostal movement. As Arnold Bittlinger comments on this problem, "I am disturbed at the development in the USA, where Pentecostal vocabulary is simply transferred to the new charismatic

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<sup>4</sup>McDonnell, p. 35.

revival."<sup>5</sup>

It is the experience of this writer that, theologically, the classical Pentecostal frame of reference and theories are taken over uncritically by many neo-Pentecostals without any serious theological questioning of their validity as correct expressions of the spirituality they profess to define. One is not asking that every lay person is to be a professional theologian (God knows we have enough of those). However, one must also realize that if the movement is to maintain its central integrity and continue to have proper development, then its theological basis must come above the level of only a personal profession of faith that one has been baptized in the Holy Spirit. Many believe that the experience of conversion and the "baptism" have brought them into full maturity of interpretation of scripture and the Christian life while at the same time they disdain critical scholarship of any kind. This is especially true of those super-spiritual Christians who, as Francis A. Schaeffer<sup>6</sup> observes, interpret I Corinthians 1-2 as though Paul were attacking wisdom and reason rather than gnostic knowledge. Since these people have ignored the critical scholars in the first place, a vicious cycle is maintained; since reason and wisdom are invalid, so must be the scholars, and if the scholars are wrong they would not read them anyway.

To be fully just, one must recognize the fact that God,

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<sup>5</sup>Arnold Bittlinger as quoted in Hollenweger, p. 245.

<sup>6</sup>Francis A. Schaeffer, *The New Super-Spirituality* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1972), p. 19.

through the Holy Spirit, may, indeed, give real spiritual insight and knowledge to an individual apart from scholarly works. But, on the other hand, the fact remains that sound spiritual doctrine and interpretation of scripture valid for all cannot be formed from the experience of only a single person, small community, or even a particular period of authentic spiritual renewal.

A case in point, and the grounds for much disagreement between neo- and non-Pentecostals, is the term, "Baptism in the Spirit." Frank Farrel in *Christianity Today*<sup>7</sup> calls for a new appraisal of the term and the hope that theologians will in the near future present new studies of the term and take a decisive stand *against* a doctrine of the "Baptism of the Spirit." Perhaps the main point of contention is not the term itself but the theological character of it. As has been shown in the biblical study of the term, it is not to be seen as something posterior to, but rather, simultaneous with, sanctification and justification at the time of a believer's conversion experience. Hence, the wholesale borrowing of classical Pentecostal categories of theological terms can lead to the same problem involved with cultural baggage--they may fit in one tradition but not in another. The neo-Pentecostals should not uncritically take over a theological system and reject their own because they have encountered an experience different than that regularly seen in their denomination. Father McDonnell comments:

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<sup>7</sup>Frank Farrel, "Outburst of Tongues: the New Penetration," *Christianity Today*, XIII:9 (1963), 3-7.

Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Presbyterianism and the other historic churches have theological and exegetical traditions which are beyond that of classical Pentecostalism. It is unfortunate when men belonging to an historic church set aside these theological and exegetical traditions simply because the central Pentecostal experience is valid.<sup>8</sup>

Because the central experience may have validity, one must be careful to recognize that the obligation still remains to theologize the experience in the light of the communion in which it occurs. To borrow the theological framework of the classical Pentecostal is to borrow from their area of greatest weakness. The neo-Pentecostals have a rich theological background from which to work and it is in this background that their experience will find its greatest support.

For abuse to be minimized in this area and schism to be avoided, a renewed and conscious effort to replace weak theology and systematics with vigorous, scholarly theological thinking within the context of the particular denomination where it occurs must be done. Since no one experiences the charismatic experience in its entirety, the person who uses and reflects upon the formulations of his particular denomination in order to interpret the content and form of his experience is less likely to oversimplify its nature and character than one who does not. If one wishes to go further in true theological reflection beyond the level of just the traditional formulations, he must be willing to be subject to the interpretive community. As the Jesuit Donald L. Gelpi comments:

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<sup>8</sup>McDonnell, p. 16.

. . . the person who accepts the same formulations of belief while reflecting on their historical origins and limitations is even less likely to go astray, provided that he relies on the other members of the community to counterbalance the limitations inherent in his own personal reflection.<sup>9</sup>

It is only in this twofold approach of respecting traditional formulations and the reflecting of them in light of that tradition and the charismatic experience that the encounter with God which can manifest itself in a variety of ways can give praise to God as the *one* God of all.

### 3. Individualistic

The third area where problems are liable to arise is where one finds excessive individualism and the equation of experience to be an exact corollary to the Holy Spirit himself. This writer has observed that the charismatic experience in any of its realizations lends itself to a subtle (and sometimes not too subtle) subjectivism. If the neo-Pentecostalist is significantly moved emotionally, he is too quick to equate his experience as the only, immediate sign of the Spirit's presence.

Individual experience, as significant as it may be, however, can never in itself be the main criterion for truth in religious experience as this makes it self-validating. Its subjective nature may prove to have no validity in reality beyond just being a state of mind. It becomes a purely inner state with no content which can be communicated to others. As G. Ernest Wright states concerning such

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<sup>9</sup> Donald L. Gelpi, *Pentecostalism* (New York: Paulist Press, 1971), p. 124.

experience:

The difficulty with the term . . . is that the human perception of God's being immediately becomes diffuse and without objective focus. The knowledge of God is reduced to a feeling, to an 'experience.' In the Protestant churches of our time no two words are in more common use than the words 'spiritual' and 'experience,' and when the two are coupled together as 'spiritual experience,' we have the popular conception of the sum total of religion . . .<sup>10</sup>

Such a subjective understanding of the encounter with God makes charismatic experience necessarily private and one becomes isolated, whereas true Christian faith is corporate and communal. This is not to destroy the integrity of the individual personality--one's faith must certainly be his *own* faith. Just as no one can live another's life, so faith which is a highly personal experience cannot be experienced by another. But at the same time, this personal faith must not lead to acute individualism which isolates a person from the community of faith, or sets up a private judgment that isolates him from the corporate evaluation of the church. This was the whole problem at Corinth, where each believer went along, individually, exercising his rights without regard to any others in the church. The Christian believer must function as a member of the total body, and not as an isolated individual.

Experience not grounded by some kind of authority ultimately becomes too diverse to have final authority for anyone. Historically, it has occurred that even where such experience elicits group assent, it tends toward the disintegration of the group into proliferated

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<sup>10</sup>Ernest G. Wright, *God Who Acts* (London: SCM Press, 1969), p. 23.

splinter groups, each of whose special brand of experience demands a new group.<sup>11</sup> History also makes it clear that the reduction of religious life to the blind and unreflective effort to recapture a specific kind of meaningful religious experience leads to a truncated rather than a liberated influence in one's life.<sup>12</sup>

Those who look to their emotions as indicators of God's presence expose themselves to many confusing and distressing problems. From a theological point of view the problem arises of the temptation to equate one's feelings with the working of God's Spirit, a presupposition that is biblically unfounded. By identifying particular subjective impressions and feelings as the voice of God or the Spirit, the charismatic is often unable to distinguish his own impulses from the authentic voice of God. While the reasons for this are not always consciously apparent a great deal of discrimination is needed in evaluating any particular manifestation said to be of the Holy Spirit. This writer has observed what amounts just to plain gullibility in what people will accept as a valid form of God speaking to them. The point of contention is not that God perhaps cannot disclose to a person his will, but the way in which such impressions are evaluated. Most of such cases involve nothing more than manipulative techniques to bring individuals into the same kind of thinking as the leader of a particular group.

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<sup>11</sup>R. A. Knox, *Enthusiasm* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), p. 387.

<sup>12</sup>Gelpi, p. 194.



By identifying the Spirit with everything, the neo-Pentecostal faces the risk of reducing the Spirit to nothing. Edward O'Connor, C.S.C., states concerning this type of religious reductionism:

While seeming to show great appreciation for him, it annihilates his distinction and transcendence. In fact, it is not rare to find the name of the Holy Spirit used to cover what is little else than the willfulness of a human spirit that refuses to submit to order or authority.<sup>13</sup>

This is one area of the charismatic experience which is especially liable to schismatic tendencies. If the individualistic subjective experience becomes the norm of interpretation of the content of its own experience the breach of schism has started. It soon appears, as in the Corinthian church, this leader against that leader, and this idea or experience against that idea or experience. Soon, no one has authority as all are authoritative. In such circumstances schism and division invariably result.

If abuse is to be minimized and schism avoided, the neo-Pentecostal movement must look seriously at the biblical concept of the church as a total interpretive body. Individual personal experience should be a moving source of renewal. But, the fact must never be forgotten that such renewal takes place in a larger community of faith in which all that is individually experienced affects the entire body and vice versa. It is only in this way that the integrity of varying religious experiences can be realized in the context of one (yet flexible) community of faith.

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<sup>13</sup>Edward D. O'Connor, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1971), p. 265.

#### 4. Anti-institutionalism

Another area of abuse, which generally flows out from the individualistic attitude when not checked, is an anti-institutional attitude which may result in the neo-Pentecostal's separation from the church. For many of the neo-Pentecostals, as well as many Protestants, it is difficult to understand that the Spirit has anything to do with the institutional and organizational character of the church.

Dr. Hendrikus Berkhof states:

The reason that they have such an individualistic and spiritualistic or, at best, personalistic conception of the Spirit is that they do not understand that God created structures as well as persons and that in his saving work he is also interested in structures insofar as they serve his purposes.<sup>14</sup>

To be sure, the church is open to the error which threatens any organization of attributing to its structure an importance or sacredness which it does not have. To many of the neo-Pentecostals who have seen a lack of vitality in the church, a present anxiety is that the Spirit will become a prisoner of the church instead of the church being the instrument of the Spirit. And, in fact, this has often been the case. On the other hand, however, it may be seen that those who leave the institutionalized church with the idea of finding greater freedom or fullness of the Holy Spirit are following a delusion. By so doing, without realizing it, they are trying to live the Christian life in a manner that tends to contradict the very means in which

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<sup>14</sup>Hendrikus Berkhof, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1967), p. 51; see also Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), I, 99.

the Spirit of Christ is given--the church. As Berkhof again states:

Nowhere is it suggested that we cannot trust God's presence in these means. That presence is undisputed. It is exactly that divine presence which is overlooked by the people . . . The decisive question is whether we really want to meet him and, as a consequence of it, whether his real presence in the institutions of his church will bless or accuse us.<sup>15</sup>

The gift of the Spirit is not a private gift to the individual as such, but is a gift to the community of believers gathered together. The Spirit resides in each individual--but the individual is also a member of the total Body of Christ, and is meant to live the life of the Spirit in that body. This means that the indwelling of the Spirit in the individual must be supported and confirmed by the Spirit's indwelling in the whole church. It cannot be emphasized enough that the institution and its means are functioning aspects of the accomplishment of the encounter of God with his people. Indeed, without this vital encounter of God with his people, the institution would in fact have no legitimate reason to exist.

One may certainly regret that the institution does not always reflect adequately the presence of the Spirit. And one should, when needed, undertake reforms of the institution when it is not adequately fulfilling its function. But it remains to be seen that separation from the institution as an institution can be adequately defended. Those who go elsewhere, though well intentioned, are misdirected in their evaluation of the problem in the institution. The problem rests not particularly with the institutional forms themselves, but

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<sup>15</sup>Berkhof, pp. 53-54.

with the way those forms are used.

It is obvious that this separationist tendency in repudiation of the institution is a possible area of schism. If abuse in this area is to be avoided, and the possibility of schism held to a minimum, the neo-Pentecostal must face up squarely to the fact that such a dichotomy is only seemingly apparent. Each one needs the other. It is probably true to say that the institutional aspect of the church as a total body is the foundation upon which the inspirational must be viewed.

The Bible points out the importance of a check on these gifts, a check against abuses. The gifts need to be subject to the judgment of the . . . body . . . the use of spiritual gifts really needs to be done under the authority of the body and in the context of the body of Christians.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, a new look at the possibilities of the Spirit's working within the church and its institution is needed by the neo-Pentecostals. Only in this way will the church, despite its institutionalized faults, be seen as holy ground on which one may find the moving of the Spirit in both institution and individual, as God calls those of various experiences of him to worship in one purpose.

##### 5. Imbalance of Doctrine

A fifth area of abuse in the neo-Pentecostal movement comes from an imbalance of doctrine which gives an overemphasis upon some particular action of the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>16</sup>Kenneth Pagard in *Jesus, Where are you Taking Us?* (Carol Stream, IL: Creation House, 1973), p. 153.

It is characteristic of many neo-Pentecostals to maintain that a certain external structure (i.e., glossolalia) is the one and only normative and evidential sign to the reality of the Spirit's presence in an individual.<sup>17</sup> From this type of position it is only a short step to maintaining certain types of worship forms as being the only kind suitable to the experience. Raised hands, shouting "Praise the Lord," and "coming under the Spirit" become signs to the Spirit's presence and without them one may say that there is no spiritual moving in a particular worship service. Thus, if a neo-Pentecostal worships in a group of non-charismatics, who do not use the outward forms he does, by his trying to change their worship forms because his are more "spiritual" he causes hard feelings and opens the way for schism. Such thinking ignores the fact enunciated by Paul to the church at Corinth--that the church was a diversity of people and forms of worship. Since the body *is* a diversity, therefore, not all members will experience or worship God in the same way as all the others. As Gelpi states:

God may choose to bring many to himself by means of charismatic prayer groups, but he may decide to touch other Christians in other ways. True Christian discernment will be careful to avoid the blunder of thinking that everyone must come to know God through practicing the external forms of charismatic piety.<sup>18</sup>

When neo-Pentecostals make an experience a normative sign of the Spirit's presence they have made a very subtle mistake. They

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<sup>17</sup>J. Rodman Williams, *The Pentecostal Reality* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1972), p. 64.

<sup>18</sup>Donald L. Gelpi, *Pentecostal Piety* (New York: Paulist Press, 1972), p. 73.

have, without realizing it, reduced faith to just the experience of faith.

Beyond this subtle reduction of faith is that the making of a certain spiritual experience the normative condition for Christian spirituality tends to encourage a form of spiritual élitism; and is, again, the basis for schism. These people separate themselves from one another on the basis of a particular manifested form of experience. By putting their emphasis on the external structure of the experience instead of on its content-significance they tend to confuse the two and thus the external structure becomes the test for fellowship. As long as one has the outward signs, they are accepted as "in." If not, they are "out." How often this writer has heard neo-Pentecostals speak of one person "having" the Spirit and another person "not having" the Spirit.

A dismissal or lessening of content has occurred in the new Pentecostalism. Instead of accepting a person on the basis of what he believes, which has always been the Christian way, its, 'do you have these external manifestations?' . . . content does not matter as long as there are the external signs and religious emotion.<sup>19</sup>

The danger is that the personal experience of the Holy Spirit becomes opposed to that of the rest of the church. They assume extraordinary gifts to be ordinary and demand that everybody possess the same spiritual realities. Such a basic assumption cannot help but to foster a schismatic atmosphere.

It must be seen that if abuse in this area is to be brought

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<sup>19</sup>Schaeffer, p. 16.

to a minimum and schism avoided, the neo-Pentecostals must realize the inherent dangers involved in such overemphasis of any particular aspect of the Holy Spirit's work. They must do some serious theological thinking about the term "baptism in the Spirit" and what it signifies. They must do the work of careful exegesis and systematics to open them up to the full implications of all the aspects of God's working with his people. Traditional Christianity must be seen as a balance of doctrines; and, not merely doctrines, but emphases. If exaggeration occurs in any one direction, the balance is destroyed. Just as there has been in the history of the church, overemphasis or unitarianism on one particular aspect of the God-head which distorts the place of the Son and the Holy Spirit, so now the reverse distortion occurs with emphasis being on the part of the Spirit in which everything is subjected to subjective experience, intuition, and the Spirit's "leading." In order for balance to be maintained a reorientation of the content of the experience as it is defined biblically must be made. That content can only be determined and maintained through serious theology in dialogue with the church. It is only in this way that those who have experienced a significant experience of the Holy Spirit can worship with one heart with those who also have had a significant spiritual experience, though in a different mode of expression.

## 6. Intolerance

Another area of abuse is intolerance of other points of view. The experience is so meaningful to them that they assume that it

should be experienced by everyone else. They become so elated in their own experience that they judge everyone who has not had a similar experience as lacking something in their spiritual life, and thus attempt to force others into their experience. While certainly not true of all neo-Pentecostals, such a position is not rare to find. A girl who spent three months in a Christian charismatic commune wrote bitterly:

They are intolerant, incapable of accepting someone who has a modified version of what they believe . . . There is an exclusivity about the movement. It is not enough to be a Christian. One has to be a spirit-filled Christian.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, a real limitation of experience is that it can be presumptuous and arrogant. When the neo-Pentecostals limit faith to the experience of it, then the criterion by which faith is judged is not scriptural guidelines but the experience. If there is that in faith which one has not experienced, one is in danger of concluding that it is not of the nature of faith. This fallacy is liable to produce a kind of religious fanaticism and will lead the unreflective neo-Pentecostal to dismiss every form of religious experience which does not match his own.

If abuse is to be minimized and schism avoided, the neo-Pentecostals must recognize the limitations of their experience. Because an experience is significant to them, by that standard alone, it cannot be held normative as a mark of spirituality for others.

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<sup>20</sup>Quoted in *The Religious Reawakening in America* (Washington: U. S. News and World Report Book Division, 1972), p. 43.



Here again, the correction for this abuse must be a reevaluation of the content-significance of spiritual experience and a greater involvement in the aspects of brotherly love. This will necessarily involve a deeper look into the way experience integrates a person's life in relationship to others of differing experiences. It means that the theological significance of the "baptism" must be further seen not as something that makes one more spiritual, or a stronger Christian than one's brother in Christ, but something that perhaps makes one stronger than *he* was.

It is only through such an understanding that the church can worship her one Lord with one voice in the uniqueness of our differences in which God has called us unto himself.

#### 7. Minimal Socio-political Awareness

The last abuse that will be considered is included not because it is a significant point in the neo-Pentecostal movement at which schism could occur within the church, but an abuse which can limit the effectiveness of the Spirit's moving within the movement. This abuse has to do with the relative lack of a true sense of socio-political awareness within the neo-Pentecostal movement. Hollenweger expresses this concern when he states:

The consequences of an emotional outburst for social and ethical problems, which ought not to be neglected . . . have so far not been considered. What is the meaning of 'turning the world upside down,' 'having experienced the presence of

the Risen Christ' in a world which is at its wit's end over the problems of racial division, war, individual and social ethics and needs more than ever the ministry of Christian thought?<sup>21</sup>

Though the neo-Pentecostal experience usually does bring a new openness towards others to share their experience, it does not automatically give people a new concern for socio-political justice. The experience of the Holy Spirit may be used by the neo-Pentecostals as a means by which to avoid the actual confrontation with real social issues and to serve only as an escape from such a confrontation. The history of the church has shown this to be the case too many times. If this abuse is to be minimized, the neo-Pentecostal must take part in the social implications of the church in which he finds himself a part. This position freely flows from the biblical concept of the body, which is certainly an overtly social image. It is only as the neo-Pentecostal engages in service to others that his spiritual experience will not be turned inward but, rather become the foundation on which the social implications of his life in the world is established.

Some of the most abusive tendencies related with the neo-Pentecostal movement have now been covered. It is not the intention here to imply that everyone of these abuses is found in the same proportion in every group of neo-Pentecostals. The truth is, that none of these abuses may arise, although this is not generally the case. Nor should it be implied that all of these abuses necessarily occur

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<sup>21</sup>Hollenweger, p. 16.

only when charismatic experience is encountered, but that all that should be inferred is that the possibility of any one of these abuses is a constant threat in the life of the church unless their causes are understood and their checks maintained.

#### B. AREAS OF STRENGTH IN THE NEO-PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT

The neo-Pentecostal movement and the charismatic experience should not be looked at only through its areas of possible weakness, but also its areas of strength should be considered.

The charismatic experience has brought to many of its members a profound and new sense of vitality in many areas of the church which have for too long been devoid of real meaning. These areas are:

##### 1. New Sense of Encounter with God

It may be seen that those who have entered into the charismatic experience no longer see God as an ambiguous, remote figure, but a living reality that makes a difference in life as a Christian. Many people in the church profess in the belief of the presence of God, but are not effectively influenced by their belief in their lives. The neo-Pentecostals have met God as a living reality and they have a personal relationship with him. God no longer is merely a philosophical ground of being, to which they recite a memorized creed, but a living, dynamic encounter in their lives. God moves from the periphery of their lives into the center--changing static attitudes and dead relationships into new and refreshing experiences.

One notices that in American churches it seems only the professionals speak about God, but many of those in the neo-Pentecostal movement speak willingly, even if embarrassingly to us, about not just what God has done, or is, but what God is *doing*. That such an immediate experience of God is needed is expounded by Kilian McDonnell:

How is the church to speak to the unbeliever or even the unbelieving believer about a belief which has nothing to do with experience, with that room in which one experiences one's concrete historical self . . . to be told that there is a power at work in his life, a power which he can at every moment of his life perceive only by a non-conscious supernatural act and never by experience is to postulate an order of existence so foreign and unrelated to his own life as he experiences it that he cannot and will not sustain any interest in so ethereal a redemption.<sup>22</sup>

Youth today seek experience in drugs, the occult, and esoteric mystic cults, but the church seems the last place they look because they do not find it a meaningful experience--to them it has no life. Experience which so many are seeking in the wrong places today, and not in the church, seems to be realized in the lives of those who have encountered God in the context of the neo-Pentecostal movement. All of which makes one ready to concede that notwithstanding the abuses which are a constant possibility and threat in light of such experience, are not the possibilities for an encounter with God in a living, dynamic faith worth the risk? Indeed, what do the dead have to lose?

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<sup>22</sup>Kilian McDonnell, "I Believe that I Might Experience," *Continuum*, V:3 (1968), 674-5.

## 2. Re-discovery of the Laity in the Church

Not since Martin Luther proposed the concept of the priesthood of all believers has it taken such a central position in the church. The neo-Pentecostals take seriously the charge that all people in the church have a part in its ministry, each with a gift which is his own contribution to the whole. While it may be inaccurate to speak of the movement as solely a lay movement, still, its impact has been especially evident as a lay movement. The neo-Pentecostal sees rightly that the Spirit is the gift to all in the church, not just to its ordained offices. They see the Spirit moving irrespective of hierarchal rank in the institution. The experience takes the believers in the pew, tied so many years to the passive, audience position and brings them into a new role of active participation in the life of the church. The neo-Pentecostal movement in the Catholic Church, where it might be expected, has not yet shown signs of anti-clericalism but has been actually very supportive of the ordained ministry insofar as they have been open to the movement.<sup>23</sup>

Ministry as a whole in the neo-Pentecostal movement is being transformed from a rigidly formal style to a more personal and informal one in which the ordained clergy and laity work side-by-side. The charismatic experience has helped to restore a sense of the position of the laity in the working of the church in a way up to now mostly professed only in theory. It is to be seen that the restoration of

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<sup>23</sup>Edward D. O'Connor, *Pentecost in the Modern World* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1972), p. 33.

the proper function of one part of the body results in a mutual promotion of welfare in the rest of the body as well.

### 3. Prayer and Prayer Life

Another area of strength of the movement has been its emphasis on prayer and the prayer life. Observation of those in the neo-Pentecostal movement reveals that they spend much time in prayer. In the area of personal prayer and group prayer (at which they sometimes spend hours) they put to shame the few minutes that are usually set aside in corporate worship in our church services, and also what most church members put aside for personal devotion. But it is not just the quantity of prayer which is of such great interest *per se*, but it is more the quality and spirit of it. It is free, loving, yet serious.

The most unique feature of the neo-Pentecostal prayer is its direction. The usual case for American churchgoers, if they pray at all, is that type of prayer which puts them essentially on the receiving end. That is, their prayer life is centered only in what God can do for them. Charismatic prayer characteristically takes the form of praise to God. The impression of the glory of God is so predominant to them, his greatness and power so real, and his power so present to them that they do not need a theory as to *why* to praise God, but rather, the way they have encountered God makes them *want* to do so.<sup>24</sup>

It is this immediacy of the neo-Pentecostals encounter with God which makes such a difference in his prayer life. It is such

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<sup>24</sup>O'Connor, *The Pentecostal Movement*, p. 152.

meaningfulness in his encounter with God and with the Holy Spirit which naturally gives prayer such a meaningful purpose. Prayer becomes praise and by the very nature of praise puts the proper center in prayer which is God himself.

#### 4. Biblically Orientated

It has shown itself to be a biblical movement. Neo-Pentecostals have shown a renewed interest in scripture and its relevance for modern Christian living. The Bible is no longer a dry, dusty book left on the shelf. It becomes to them a living book because they have encountered its living Lord. They do not read scripture because it is a duty, but because they want to. While it is near at hand to bring up instances where scripture is characteristically abused by those who take its meaning in fundamental literalness, most churches would, or should, covet the strength in their life of those who take scripture and its implications seriously. If the churches were doing their job of teaching their people what the Bible is and how it is to be viewed and used, one would wonder why they would not rejoice at its members' renewed interest in it. One may ask whose fault it is when the normal cross-section of a congregation does not know the basics of studying the scripture in a responsible way, and because of this ignorance, abuse its teachings.

#### 5. Ecumenical Element

Certainly one of the more surprising and unexpected aspects

of the neo-Pentecostal movement has been found in its broad scope of ecumenism, especially in the Catholic Church.<sup>25</sup> This writer has observed prayer groups with Roman Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Lutherans and as many other smaller denominations, gathered together at one time in prayer and fellowship. This has not only included lay members of these denominations but their ordained clergy as well. As the neo-Pentecostal movement brought these groups together it created natural bonds of mutual concern to all those who came into them. "These were not, however, bonds of doctrinal agreement; for it is not the spread of ideas about the Holy Spirit that constitutes the Pentecostal movement, but *experience* of the Spirit's powerful action."<sup>26</sup>

The success so far in the cross-denominational participation in the neo-Pentecostal movement is due to the fact that the participants do not come together to criticize other traditions or look at differences, but to worship together in a common spirit. This does not mean that such differences are not studied or noticed; it only means that the common spirit of all those who participate in worship together see actual worship of God as transcending denominational differences. Whether or not this remains so is for the future to reveal.

### C. THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH

Now that this study has covered the biblical basis of the charismatic experience, its historical and psychological structure,

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<sup>25</sup>O'Connor, *Pentecost*, p. 31.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 33.



and its functionality in the present movement, both in a negative and a positive way, the response of the church to it as an authentic way of encountering God must be considered. This is no easy consideration. Prejudice and bias, preconceived ideas and ignorance of one another's viewpoints have clouded the important issues. As was stated before, however, the issue is not so much any particular spiritual manifestation, but rather, fullness of life in the Holy Spirit. If this distinction is kept in mind, a more rational, and hopefully unbiased, evaluation can be made. The central question, then, is: In what way can the fullness of life in the Holy Spirit best be realized?

How should the church respond to this goal which has characterized itself in the emergence of the neo-Pentecostal movement? The only response the church should not make is overreaction in either direction. She should not dismiss the experience as having no validity whatsoever for those who have experienced it, or for the church itself, not should she accept it wholeheartedly before she has had time to examine its weaknesses and strengths and had time to evaluate the way it must (or can) be brought into the total experience of the church as a possibility of encounter with God, and how it could function in that context.

But the church cannot use this time of evaluation to cover up its inadequacies of meeting the demand of a firm response to the nature of the neo-Pentecostal movement or it will find that the movement will go on without it. It remains to be seen that this is the most suitable answer to all concerned. The neo-Pentecostals need the church and

its institution as much as the church needs something of the neo-Pentecostals' sense of the moving of the Spirit. The question is the one that has been repeatedly asked here, "How can unity of faith in diversity become a functional reality in the context of a single community?"

This means that the church *must* enter into a serious dialogue with the neo-Pentecostal movement as a serious possibility of their experience being an authentic encounter with God which has implications for the entire church, rather than to simply ignore them as being deluded fanatics. A pat-them-on-the-head approach is full of danger and must be avoided. To belittle, or so to seem, another's significant experience will certainly do nothing to bring understanding and will close the door to the dialogue that it needed.

When a person's religious experience is at best tolerated, or at worst outlawed, one can hardly expect to see healthy spiritual growth and development. Church officials must recognize their own measure of responsibility for some of the unwholesome developments of the charismatic movement, for they have in too many cases abdicated responsible and caring leadership.<sup>27</sup>

The responsible approach of the church to the movement is that which is put forth by Wayne Oates and which involves response at the level of leadership and evaluates the experience in the context of fellowship. As Oates comments:

Furthermore, it is important that some place and opportunity for expression may be given. It is important that every effort be made to understand the deepest needs of the persons involved,

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<sup>27</sup>Larry Christenson, *A Message to the Charismatic Movement* (Minneapolis: Dimension, 1972), p. 74.

and every discipline be exercised to require that they make themselves understandable. This means that pastor and elders . . . take an approach of sympathetic listening, create openings of communion and fellowship through nonjudgmental efforts, and be on their own guard lest they underestimate the vitality and creativity of such persons.<sup>28</sup>

Another factor to be accounted for here is that the church has never dealt adequately with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches has commented:

The emergence and growth of Independent Churches in Africa, of Pentecostal Churches and Pentecostalism within the established Churches could point to some deficiency of traditional Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. Theology and practice of these Churches has to a large extent neglected the Holy Spirit, except for some standard affirmations about his continuing presence . . . the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and even more the sensitivity to his active presence in the Church and the world were and still are underdeveloped in the western tradition of Christianity.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, it appears that the church must approach the question of the neo-Pentecostal movement and its implications for the church from two directions. The first is that of true dialogue with the neo-Pentecostals and the second is renewed and continued study to adequately consider the full implications of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit for the church today.

That such a study and dialogue will be complicated and lengthy is not to be debated. It is not the intention of this writer to attempt to formulate or organize a theological study of that type.

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<sup>28</sup>Wayne E. Oates, *et al.*, *Glossolalia* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967), p. 99.

<sup>29</sup>"Spirit, Order and Organization," in *Faith and Order* (Louvain: World Council of Churches, 1971), pp. 117, 131-32.

However, on the basis of evaluation of the biblical, historical, and psychological data this writer will attempt to analyze what the possibilities for such a theology may be. That such an evaluation at this point can only be superficial is inevitable as more time is still needed in which to determine further the effects of the movement in its relationship to the church.

#### D. NEGATIVE CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE NEO-PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT

In evaluating the effect of the charismatic experience and the neo-Pentecostal movement some definite conclusions can be made.

##### 1. Schismatic Potential

It is interesting to note that the areas of abuse (or possible abuse) within the neo-Pentecostal movement are striking close to those abuses which have similarly characterized such experience in the history of the church from movement to movement. Certainly, such an evaluation does much to view the neo-Pentecostal movement in a negative light. And so it should be viewed. When such abuses or structures of experience which foster such abusive tendencies are not realized, similar abuses recur. The neo-Pentecostal movement must be constantly aware that the type of experience it offers and professes has been the cause of abuse and has been schismatic in its influence on the unity of the church. It will only be when the neo-Pentecostal movement realizes and seriously grapples with the fact that charismatic

experience is prone to such divisive tendencies that the schismatic character of certain forms of the experience will be corrected. This may mean that the neo-Pentecostal piety, if it is to do something about its schismatic character, must do the best it can to avoid *exclusive* preoccupation with some of the more dramatic of its expressions, such as prophecy or glossolalia. It is only as the neo-Pentecostals interact with other members of the Body of Christ and become sensitive to the experiences of others that the schismatic character of enthusiastic-charismatic movements of the past can be avoided.

As R. A. Knox states: " . . . traditional Christianity is a balance of doctrines, and not merely of doctrines but of emphases."<sup>30</sup> Here lies the crux of the problem. It is not the doctrine of the Holy Spirit or of his action in the lives of men that is necessarily being criticized. Rather, it is the exaggeration of a particular aspect of a doctrine, rather than the doctrine itself, which is being faulted. It has been seen in almost every historical instance of schism studied, that division occurred because of an exaggeration of a part of the Christian faith which, if it were properly balanced, would not have caused division by itself. Thus, it is a question of balance of emphasis to which the neo-Pentecostal movement must address itself in order to prevent the errors of the past.

## 2. Validity of Doctrine

Another conclusion is that which concerns the whole question

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<sup>30</sup>Knox, p. 580.

of the validity of the doctrine of "baptism in the Spirit" and theology as it is put forth by the neo-Pentecostals. As Father Simon Tugwell states:

The crucial question for us is, can we accept the doctrine of 'baptism in the Spirit?' And if not, how are we to cope, theologically and pastorally, with the experience or experiences that go under that name?<sup>31</sup>

The whole thrust of this dissertation has been the relationship between the content of the inner reality to the structure of its outward meaning. It has been seen that unless one follows the biblical guidelines which establish this relationship, the internal integrity of the charismatic experience as an encounter with God is destroyed. While the neo-Pentecostal movement has not yet gone this far, it certainly faces this possibility. As has been already pointed out, cultural transference of ideas, conceptions, and identifications of spiritual realities may not be valid in the neo-Pentecostal framework. As was shown in Chapter II, the term "baptism in the Spirit" biblically has a much different direction and meaning than which is ascribed to it by the charismatic. This one point completely, or nearly so, invalidates much of the methodology and terminology of neo-Pentecostal theology. This means significantly that the neo-Pentecostal faces the task of rethinking, reconceptualizing, and retheologizing his experience in terms of this fact. Unless the neo-Pentecostal attempts to do so, his theology, while being incorrect, will also be schismatic and lead to abusive tendencies in relationship to the unity of the church. For

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<sup>31</sup> Simon Tugwell, *Did You Receive the Spirit?* (New York: Paulist Press, 1972), p. 84.

example, a Methodist expressing a charismatic experience in Pentecostal forms in a Methodist service risks the danger of violating the integrity of the rest of the member's experience as he incorrectly applies a certain theology and forms of worship to a situation foreign to it. As Kilian McDonnell, who is quoted here at length because of his perception of the problem at hand, observes:

It would be unfortunate if those who stand in these traditions would adopt a rigid sectarian view of their theology of the baptism of the Holy Spirit . . . Denominational consciousness of this sectarian character, whatever the kernel of truth . . . is ultimately destructive. But there is another species of denominational theological consciousness which I would like to recommend. This is that elaboration of theological reality which works within an historic tradition, attempting to work within the categories of a specific denominational tradition in order to give credibility to the Pentecostal charismatic theologian (which I am not) will make his greatest contribution by working out the theology of the charismatic experience within the categories of his own denominational tradition.<sup>32</sup>

Thus, the neo-Pentecostal is called to the task of defining and identifying his experience in the terms and forms which fit the categories of his own denomination rather than to incorporate in a haphazard way the elements of another tradition's theology without evaluating and testing it to the standards of his own.

### 3. Individualistic Tendencies

A third conclusion calls for the neo-Pentecostal to become involved as a member of the Body of Christ rather than to be a solitary

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<sup>32</sup>Kilian McDonnell, *The Baptism in the Spirit as an Ecumenical Problem* (Notre Dame: Charismatic Renewal Service, 1972), pp. 30-31.

member or a small group of individuals. John D. Haughey, S.J., states:

A pneumatic spirituality, however, seldom begins in and certainly cannot long be sustained by the solitary individual. It presumes community . . . their ability to confirm, confront, and affirm one another in the spirituality is a *sine qua non* of its continuing.<sup>33</sup>

Thus, any individualistic, self-illuminating and self-interpreting experience by the neo-Pentecostalist must be seen as inconsistent to the well being of the total body. The neo-Pentecostal experience cannot be an end in itself but must be a means to a more significant integration of an individual into the total life of the church.

Such individualism, as has been shown in Chapter III, has been a precursor to division in the history of the church. It is only when the neo-Pentecostal accepts his experience as being a part of a larger community, and not the only possible expression of pneumatic spirituality, will the divisive character of individualism be corrected. As Wayne Oates states: "One criterion of the validity of a theological idea is its fellowship quality, i.e., whether or not it breaks down or builds up . . ." <sup>34</sup> If the neo-Pentecostal experience thus creates disunity, those involved in it must seriously evaluate the way in which they have structured their experience. Hence, the neo-Pentecostal experience must be balanced by community responsibility and interaction.

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<sup>33</sup>John C. Haughey, *The Conspiracy of God* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1973), p. 105.

<sup>34</sup>Wayne E. Oates, *Religious Factors in Mental Illness* (New York: Association Press, 1955), p. 77.



#### 4. Anti-institutional Attitudes

The neo-Pentecostal must realize that organization need not be antithetical to the free moving of the Spirit, but that it is actually a benefit to that moving. Historically, too often the spiritual enthusiast left the church because they could not see this fact. The enthusiast, because he sees worldliness in part of the church, rejects all of the church. This individual, however, misses the point. By leaving the church he forsakes many forms of organization which have been tested through the centuries and which are viable ways of expressing the encounter with God. The enthusiast, though, in his enthusiasm discards everything and instead of attempting to reform, begins his own movement which to him is pure of all the worldliness of the church he has left. However, such a conception is really a delusion because one can never say the church is absolutely wrong, just as no one can say the church is absolutely right. The neo-Pentecostal must see that it is the essence of grace that the Holy Spirit works even in sinful men and outmoded institutions and that the answer to restrictive organization is not abolition, or withdrawal, but reorganization.

This rethinking of the place of the Spirit in relationship to the structure of the church is a constant one which ultimately decides how the church will approach its worship of God. As Wilhelm Hahn states:

. . . the form of worship is a task with which the Church is faced. Fundamentally, the form is required to serve the content, which is the divine side of worship. It must

seek to point, as clearly and emphatically as possible, to the activity of God, which is the basis of worship. It is the church's task to find the form best suited to do this.<sup>35</sup>

Thus, the neo-Pentecostal must view form not as antithetical to content, but rather as that which directs and makes clear how the content of his experience, which is the Holy Spirit, operates.

#### E. THE RESPONSE OF THE CHURCH TO THE NEO-PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT

Now that the areas which must concern the neo-Pentecostals, if they wish to have dialogue with the church, have been considered, the areas the church must consider in relationship to the neo-Pentecostals will be evaluated.

The church has been called to respond to the neo-Pentecostal movement and the charismatic experience. It need almost not be said that its response will be decisive in the near future as to the form and direction which the movement will take. The church must surely consider the question from all sides and objectively make its answer. The church can respond with unreserved condemnation of the movement. Based on the biblical, historical and psychological data one could certainly argue that enthusiastic-charismatic experience has always brought division in the unity of the church and perhaps always will. One may say that the experience brings confusion and is schismatic in its basic nature and that the neo-Pentecostal movement will bring

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<sup>35</sup> Wilhelm Hahn, *Worship and Congregation* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963), p. 45.

more harm than good to the church. Perhaps it will. At this point, however, the answer is still undecisive.

One must always resist the temptation to play God by trying to decide in advance what would be harmful to men. Rather he must be concerned to perceive what God is actually doing, difficult as that is to do, in men's lives.<sup>36</sup>

This then is the question set before the church as it readies its response to the neo-Pentecostal movement--"What is God doing in it?" The church must ask in what manner is God working in the neo-Pentecostal movement, and how is that work strengthening the church as the Body of Christ? It will be on the basis of this evaluation that the church must frame its response.

#### F. POSITIVE CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE NEO-PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT

At this point, the response of the church will be considered in light of the four conclusions just stated about the neo-Pentecostal movement and charismatic experience.

##### 1. Creative Conflict

While it may be true that charismatic-enthusiastic experience has in the past brought disunity is it to be inferred that there is never to be conflict in the church? Have we so idealized unity that we have forgotten that it has never been a realized fact in the church

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<sup>36</sup>Haughey, p. 118.

since its beginning?<sup>37</sup> It may be noted that if church unity had been a reality in fact in the ancient church three-fourths of the New Testament corpus would never have been written, as it arose out of, and was the answer to, problems which threatened the unity of the ancient church. We have idealistically, but unrealistically, set the goal of unity before us as something that the church once had but lost. The fact is, though, that it never was totally unified and free of divisions. As long, however, as the church puts this example before itself, the longer it will work under the false impression that we must recapture a never-realized state of perfection of the past. This attitude can only lead to frustration. We must rather seek to creatively work with division as we find it. Everyone is not going to think alike about any one thing (especially religious experience) at any one time. To realize this, in the case of the neo-Pentecostal movement, will certainly do much to dispel the belief that it should conform in all points to the denominational bodies in which it arises. As Paul stated in I Corinthians 12, the body is not all the same, but rather it is made up of various parts which in their totality form one body.

One may certainly ask if the lack of conflict is necessarily even a Christian idea. Morton T. Kelsey states:

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<sup>37</sup>John Knox, *The Early Church and the Coming Great Church* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1955), pp. 11ff.

Tongues undoubtedly causes conflict, but is conflict necessarily evil from a Christian point of view? I am not sure that Christianity is always meant to bring peace and harmony as a soothing salve, however much the ministers of the church (myself included) would like it to be so.<sup>38</sup>

Conflict must then be seen as part of the nature of all human experience, including religious experience. Therefore, unity must not be unrealistically assumed to be indicative in every situation of sectarian schism. Although it may be so determined, this is only by evaluation of all the relevant factors. This is not to say that conflict should not at all times be looked at in view of resolution, but, too, that conflict in itself may not always at every point be resolved.

## 2. Vitality of Christian Experience

While it may be true that the neo-Pentecostal is incorrect in the use of certain terminology and methodology in the expression of the charismatic experience, the denominational church must be careful not to discard the significant spirituality which the experience points to because the neo-Pentecostal may have structured it incorrectly.

The church must be careful that its motivation in confronting the neo-Pentecostal is not just a negative reaction to fanatic or abusive tendencies in the movement. Abuse occurs in almost every part of life and it need only be said that if one reacts just to the abuses one will never realize the benefits. The charismatic experience

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<sup>38</sup> Morton T. Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1968), p. 230.

offers a vitality of life that is often not present in the church which is to be the "temple" of God and the Living Spirit. Wolfhart Pannenberg, speaking of the working of the Spirit, comments:

It is obvious that the average reality of Christian life and Christian communities is not altogether convincing if compared with the full dynamic of the New Testament description of the spiritual presence. . . .<sup>39</sup>

Karl Barth goes so far as to assert that:

There may be too little of the pneumatic, but never too much. It is from this too little . . . that all offenses and distortions and aberrations and entanglements derive in the community. The community is healthy in proportion as it gives free course to the Spirit.<sup>40</sup>

Though Barth perhaps overstates the place of the Spirit in the church, he nevertheless points to the important nature of the Spirit's role. The church must be careful not to reject the Spirit which is the initiator of the charismatic experience because certain forms of the experience have been structured incorrectly. This has traditionally been the case in the history of the church and the church has usually suffered because of this overreaction in response. The result is that the power which originally brought the church into being becomes a forgotten aspect of the church's role.

In the light of the neo-Pentecostal movement, the church today is called to reevaluate its thinking of the Holy Spirit and to allow

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<sup>39</sup>Wolfhart Pannenberg, "The Working of the Spirit in the Creation and in the People of God," in *Spirit, Faith, and the Church* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970), p. 24.

<sup>40</sup>Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1961), IV/3, 321.

more room for the Spirit's moving. Indeed, the church today must realize that the living Spirit must be sought more than ever if it is to meet the demands of the world which is crying for answers to the crises it faces.

### 3. Its Christian Context

The lesson of individualism in contrast to the concept of the Body of Christ has been a constant threat in the expression of the charismatic experience. But it should be remembered that this is a two-way street. The church must be careful how it approaches its members who have realized a charismatic experience if it is not to repeat this error. Michael Harper, in commenting on two extremes to be avoided, says about one:

The first is the forbidding of the exercise of spiritual gifts in the church and of course the excommunicating of those who manifest them. This is a step which Paul never resorted to, even under the strong provocation of the scandalous behaviour of the Corinthians.<sup>41</sup>

If the denominational church forces out the neo-Pentecostal just because his experience is *liable* to abuse, it may be seen that the actions of the denominational church are no better than the enthusiast who rejects the church because it is not charismatic. Paul made it clear in I Corinthians that the individual parts of the body needed all the other parts. As valid as some of the criticisms of the neo-Pentecostal movement are, it is doubtful whether one can ever

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<sup>41</sup>Michael Harper, *As in the Beginning* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1965), p. 124.

say that its expression as an encounter with God must be excluded from the body. It seems that the church today is more willing to accept the religious expressions of non-Christian movements than they are to receive the differing religious expressions of those who hold the same faith. This is not to say that other religious expressions are not or cannot be used to help the Christian better understand the encounter with God. But it is to say that we must surely give as much weight to the charismatic experience which occurs within the faith as to those expressions which do not. It is only as the church remains open to the varying possibilities and expressions of the encounter with God that *real*, not just professed unity in diversity, can become a fact.

#### 4. Recognition of the Place of the Spirit in the Church

While it may be true that the neo-Pentecostal has often seen organization as antithetical rather than complimentary to Spirit, it is still true that at times this is the case. Paul Tillich observes:

The church must prevent the confusion of ecstasy with chaos, and it must fight for structure. On the other hand, it must avoid the institutional profanization of the Spirit which took place in the early Catholic Church as a result of its replacement of *charisma* with office. Above all, it must avoid the secular profanization of contemporary Protestantism which occurs when it replaces ecstasy with doctrinal or moral structure.<sup>42</sup>

Tillich goes on to say that institutionalism which disregards the spiritual presence opens the door for disruptive forms of ecstasy

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<sup>42</sup>Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), III, 117; see also Smith, p. 29f.



and is responsible for reaction against the spiritual presence.<sup>43</sup>

One may say that organization is not intrinsically bad; but, neither is it necessarily intrinsically good. The temptation to use, or perhaps more accurately to say, *misuse* organization is a present danger in the light of the church's response to the neo-Pentecostal movement. It is eye-opening to consider Tillich's remark that the disregard of spiritual presence opens the door to more harm than if the presence is realized and its abuses confronted. Thus, organization and institutionalism which is preserved only so that the risk of encounter with the spiritual is avoided in the end fosters the very abuses they were intended to correct.

This certainly has much to say to the church as it prepares to respond to the neo-Pentecostal movement. We can no longer hide behind our institutions as being the only adequate expressions of the presence of the Spirit of God in our midst. To do so is to not only deny the possibility of new ways of the Spirit's moving but it is to seal ourselves into neatly formalized, categorically correctly structured, but dead, organization. Perhaps the first step is for us to admit that this is oftentimes the case. As Samuel Shoemaker comments:

. . . the first thing we must do (and it applies to us all, whether or not we think we understand spiritual awakenings and contribute to them) is to admit that our financial and organizational and building operations have far outrun our spiritual aims and achievements.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Tillich, pp. 117-18.

<sup>44</sup>Samuel Shoemaker, *With the Holy Spirit and With Fire* (Waco, TX: Word, 1960), p. 86.

That's a hard statement to swallow; but, it is usually the things that are hardest to swallow that are most true.

Thus, the response of the church to the place of the neo-Pentecostal experience in the denominational church has a somewhat different starting point than was first stated. The question is not so much, "Is charismatic experience a threat to the institution?" as, "Is it an authentic expression of the encounter of God regardless of its effect on the institution?" As the non-charismatic Watson Mills states:

But isn't it true that institutional survival ought never to be the church's first concern? Rather the company of the committed ought to be concerned that the church be an authentic channel for God's activity in the world. Thus, the important question for the church is not whether glossolalia threatens the institutional structure, but whether glossolalia is a legitimate expression of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in a human life.<sup>45</sup>

#### G. FINAL CONCLUSIONS

What then must be the attitude of the church toward the neo-Pentecostal movement? It might first be asked, is there any way at this time to determine that the charismatic experience is not in any way an authentic encounter with God? Having viewed the neo-Pentecostal movement, and having read the literature by both the charismatics and the non-charismatics, this writer does not believe that question can be answered in the affirmative. To this writer, to say that a particular religious experience is unauthentic because he himself does

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<sup>45</sup>Watson E. Mills, *Speaking in Tongues* (Waco, TX: Word, 1973), p. 23.

not embrace it, marks the beginning of a new Inquisition. How is it possible to deny the experience of God in any man? As the Methodist, Albert Outler states:

If the United Methodist church cannot provide as welcome a home for her right-wing Montanists as she has for her left-wing prophets, she will have proven herself less Catholic than Wesley--or St. Paul--ever supposed a church could be, and still deserves that name.<sup>46</sup>

The force of this dissertation has been the question of how unity in faith can be established in diversity of experience. The answer is that it is a difficult goal to achieve and the problems involved are many. It has been shown that the charismatic experience in the past has been divisive, schismatic, and sectarian in its nature and that it is liable to the same abuses today. One may have biblical, historical, and psychological questions and reservations regarding the neo-Pentecostal movement, but how can the church deny without exception the significant experience of a growing number of its members? There is no guarantee that such movements and experience will contribute to unity and not schism. But the quest for God, and the seeking for significance in the experience of him, must nevertheless proceed. For wherever truth abounds, while we are yet human, half-truth and error shall also be found. But to deny the openness of the soul to God because of fear of what *may* happen is to dry up the power of God in the lives of those who seek him. It may also be shown that, historically, such movements brought into the church a new awareness of the

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<sup>46</sup>Albert Outler, "Relating 'Extraordinary Gifts' and 'Ordinary Fruits' of the Spirit," *United Methodist Reporter*, II:10 (February 22, 1974), 2.

vitality and life which is in the Holy Spirit. It seems the church is faced with a double dilemma--that it can die because it is no longer spiritually alive--or that it can die because its charismatic enthusiasts kill it. Either prospect has the same ultimate effect. Extremes in either direction will surely not edify the Body of Christ or bring it unity.

The church is called to respond to the neo-Pentecostal experience, and the neo-Pentecostal is called to interact with the church, but more importantly both are called to worship one Lord in one faith. Perhaps the answer is that each must keep itself in perspective. At this point only time will reveal the possibilities and consequences which the neo-Pentecostal movement and the charismatic experience will have on the church.

Surely it would be as presumptuous of the church to deny other Christians a place in the church because they have come into the charismatic experience as it would be for the neo-Pentecostals to say that the church must become a totally charismatic community. Again, it seems that only proper emphasis and balance will avoid abuse on either side.

While this is said, however, it must be restated that the main responsibility for the correct use of any experience rests with the one who experiences it. Thus, it remains the responsibility of the neo-Pentecostal to analyze, test, and evaluate his experience by the biblical guidelines and the lessons of history and psychology and to formulate a structure of experience which authentically expresses the

content of his experience which is the encounter of God through the Holy Spirit. If he fails to do so, or if he ignores his responsibility to do so, the legitimacy of his experience as an authentic encounter with God must and should be questioned. Schism and division in the name of an experience of God is still schism and division. The neo-Pentecostal has serious questions and complex problems of terminology, methodology, psychological attitudes, and theological presuppositions to face if he is to be a part of the body without creating schism which is the result of fanaticism and enthusiasm alone. The neo-Pentecostal must never lose sight of the fact that the content of his experience was first formulated, expressed, and experienced in the context of the church. He cannot leave that context if he wishes to maintain the integrity of his experience; and, he must realize that his experience is only *one* of the *many* ways in which God has decided to work in His church. It is only in this way that *true* unity in diversity of experience can be realized.

#### H. GUIDELINES

The church and the neo-Pentecostal, in order to affect this unity, need to follow guidelines which are cognizant of the abuses as well as the possibilities of the charismatic experience. At this time there appears to be no indication that the experience, while liable to abusive tendencies, is not in itself, an authentic encounter of God. If the guidelines are followed, perhaps the movement will grow in healthy ways, if it stays in the context of the church. There have

appeared numerous sets of guidelines from many valid sources. Perhaps the most sensitive, realistic, and helpful of these are those which were set up by the Special Committee on the Work of the Holy Spirit by the United Presbyterian Church,<sup>47</sup> and which this writer now presents (the details of which may be changed to meet the polity of any particular denomination).

### Guidelines

We believe the Church needs to pray for a sensitivity to see the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in our world today. We are not unmindful that the problems of discrimination between the true and the fraudulent are considerable, but we must not allow the problems to paralyze our awareness to his presence, nor should we permit our fear of the unknown and the unfamiliar to close our minds against being surprised by grace. We know the misuse of mystical experience is an ever-present possibility, but that is no reason to preclude its appropriate use. We believe that those who are newly endowed with gifts and perceptions of the Spirit have an enthusiasm and joy to give and we also believe that those who rejoice in our traditions of having all things done in 'decency and order' have a sobering depth to give. We therefore plead for a mutuality of respect and affection.

In facing the issues raised by Neo-Pentecostal experiences, we plead for a spirit of openness and love. We commend to the attention of the Church the disciplines of I Corinthians 13, as well as the 20th Chapter of The Westminster Confession on Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience. The emphasis of The Confession of 1967 on Reconciliation is central to the attitude we seek for all parties to these problems in the Church. Without an active, calm, objective and loving understanding of our brother's religious experience, however different from one's own, reconciliation is impossible. Therefore we urge the reading of The Confession of 1967 on the theme of Reconciliation.

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<sup>47</sup>United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. *Report of the Special Committee on the Work of the Holy Spirit to the 182nd General Assembly* (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1970), pp. 22-28.

The criteria by which we judge the validity of another's religious experience must ever be its compatibility with the mind and spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, as we know them in the New Testament. If the consequence and quality of a reported encounter of the Holy Spirit be manifestly conducive to division, self-righteousness, hostility, exaggerated claims of knowledge and power, then the experience is subject to serious question. However, when the experience clearly results in new dimensions of faith, joy, and blessings to others, we must conclude that this is 'what the Lord hath done' and offer him our praise.

### *Guidelines for All*

1. Be tolerant and accepting of those whose Christian experiences differ from your own.
2. Continually undergird and envelop all discussions, conferences, meetings, and persons in prayer.
3. Be open to new ways in which God by his Spirit may be speaking to the Church.
4. Recognize that even though spiritual gifts may be abused, this does not mean that they should be prohibited.
5. Remember that like other new movements in church history, Neo-Pentecostalism may have a valid contribution to make to the ecumenical Church.

### *For Ministers Who Have Had Neo-Pentecostal Experiences*

1. Combine with your Neo-Pentecostalism a thorough knowledge of, and adherence to, United Presbyterian polity and tradition. Remember your charismatic influence will, in large part, be earned by your loving and disciplined use of the charismatic, and by your conduct as a pastor to *all* your congregation, as well as by your participation as a responsible presbyter.
2. Seek a deepening and continued friendship with your clergy colleagues within and without the Neo-Pentecostal experience.
3. Remember your ordination vows, particularly the vow to 'approve the government and discipline of the United Presbyterian Church' and your promise to be 'A friend among your comrades in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's word and Spirit.'<sup>\*</sup>

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<sup>\*</sup>From *Overture F* (1969) amending ordination questions.

4. Avoid the temptation to force your personal views and experiences on your brethren. Seek to understand those whose spiritual experiences differ from your own.

5. Seek to grow in your skills as a Biblical exegete, a systematic theologian, and as a preacher in *all* the fullness of the gospel.

*For Ministers Who Have Not Had Neo-Pentecostal Experiences*

1. Remember the lessons of church history when God's people re-discover old truths; that the process is often disquieting, that it usually involves upheaval, change, and a degree of suffering, misunderstanding, and sometimes even persecution.

2. Seek first-hand knowledge of what Neo-Pentecostalism means to those who have experienced it. Avoid a judgment until this first-hand knowledge is obtained (i.e., by attending and evaluating their prayer meetings, etc.). Then evaluate the observations as a Christian, a United Presbyterian minister, and as a sympathetic, conscientious pastor. Keep an openness to Scriptural teaching regarding the charismatic gifts.

3. When speaking in tongues occurs, seek to know what it means to the speaker in his private devotional life, what it means when used for intercessory prayer, especially in group worship. We should be aware that speaking in tongues is a minor 'gift of the Spirit' for many of those who have had Neo-Pentecostal experiences.

4. Seek to know the meaning of the other 'gifts of the Spirit' in the Neo-Pentecostal experience, such as the utterance of wisdom, of knowledge; the gift of faith, of healing, of working of miracles, of prophesying.

5. Keep in mind that Neo-Pentecostals may be prone to neglect formal exegesis, systematic theology, and adherence to tradition and polity of our denomination. They may, at times, tend toward a new form of legalism, and may consequently be in need of loving guidance from their peers, or from their pastor, or from their session. Like many of the laity within our fellowship, they too frequently need to understand the place and authority of their session. They may also, at times, tend to be over-enthusiastic concerning their experiences, to believe that their experiences should be duplicated by every sincere Christian, to limit their fellowship in the church to those who have had similar experiences so that pastoral guidance is sometimes needed to bring their prayer meetings under the authority of the session and open to all interested members of their congregation.



*For Laity Who Have Had Neo-Pentecostal Experiences*

1. Remember to combine with your Neo-Pentecostal enthusiasm a thorough knowledge of and adherence to the United Presbyterian form of church government. Neo-Pentecostalism is new in our tradition. Consult with your minister (or ministers) and if he (they) has not also had your experience, help him to know what it is, what it means to you, what it does for you. Urge him to attend your group meetings.

2. Pray that the Spirit brings understanding, and that he may help you to maintain empathy with your colleagues and all your fellow United Presbyterians. Remember that all members of any United Presbyterian congregation are under the authority of the session, welcome any opportunity granted you to interpret your experience to the elders, or to the session itself.

3. Strive for a scholarly knowledge of Scriptural content in combination with your spiritual experiences. Strive to integrate your experiences with the theological traditions of our Church.

4. Avoid undisciplined and undiplomatic enthusiasm in your eagerness to share your experiences with others. Resist the temptation to pose as an authority on spiritual experiences. Failure in this area often causes your fellow United Presbyterians to accuse you of spiritual pride.

5. Strive to keep your prayer meetings, etc., open to all members of your congregation. When non-Neo-Pentecostals do attend, discuss with them the content of the meeting with an interpretation of the significance of the content to Neo-Pentecostals.

6. Seek attendance at your meetings by your ministers and members of your session.

7. Remember that there are many types of Christian experiences, which lead to spiritual growth. Neo-Pentecostal experience is only *one* of these.

8. Accept every valid opportunity to become personally involved in the work and mission of your own congregation. Let the results of Neo-Pentecostal experience be seen in the outstanding quality of your church membership. Be an obvious and enthusiastic supporter of your congregation, its pastor and session; of your Presbytery, your synod, the General Assembly, and the mission of each. This may well be the most effective witness you can offer to the validity and vitality of your Neo-Pentecostal experience. Strive to integrate your experience with the theological traditions of our Church.

9. It is not necessary to carry all the Pentecostal baggage.

10. Keep your Neo-Pentecostal experience in perspective. No doubt it has caused you to feel that you are a better Christian. Remember that this does not mean that you are better than other Christians, but that you are, perhaps, a better Christian than you were before.

*For Laity Who Have Not Had Neo-Pentecostal Experiences*

1. In our Reformed tradition, we believe God is constantly seeking to reform and renew his Church, including the United Presbyterian Church. The advent of Neo-Pentecostalism into our denomination may be one aspect of reformation and renewal. In any case, pray that God may make known to you your own place in the process of reformation and renewal.

2. Should some fellow members of your congregation be brought into Neo-Pentecostalism, accept this development matter-of-factly. Should it happen to edify, thank God.

3. Be aware of the tendency to condemn the Pentecostals and Neo-Pentecostalism. If such is your reaction, restrain the tendency and seek to observe personally the Neo-Pentecostals in their prayer meetings, in your congregation, and in the mission of your church. Examine scriptural teaching about this. Pray about it. Discuss your concern with your minister. Remember that all members of any United Presbyterian congregation are under the authority of the session.

4. Do not be disturbed if this experience has not been given to you. This does *not* mean that you are an inferior Christian. Your function in the work and mission of your congregation may call for other gifts. Each Christian is a unique member of the body of Christ.

5. Should your minister be a Neo-Pentecostal, accept the fact calmly and affectionately. Discuss the matter with him. Help him to be mindful of the spiritual needs of *all* his congregation, to be a pastor and teacher to all, and encourage him in his preaching to present the fullness of all aspects of the gospel. Remember that your minister is the moderator of your session and that it is the elders on the session who have the responsibility to consult formally with your minister but that he is a member of, and under the authority of, the presbytery.

*For Presbyteries*

1. Refer prayerfully and thoughtfully to the other sections of these Guidelines.

2. Remember the pastoral responsibilities of the presbytery toward ministers, sessions, and congregations within the presbytery, particularly toward those whose spiritual experience may involve Neo-Pentecostalism.

3. While the General Assembly, in accepting the report of this Committee, takes the position of 'openness' regarding the Neo-Pentecostal movement within our denomination, the presbytery must decide whether any given instance involving a minister or a congregation is for the edification and the purity of its area of the Church.

4. If there is divisiveness involved in a particular Neo-Pentecostal situation, make as careful an evaluation as possible, remembering that there are other kinds of issues which also divide our fellowships. Sometimes tensions and conflicts may result in the edification and greater purity of the Church, and need therefore to be wisely handled by the judicatories of the United Presbyterian Church.

5. When a Presbytery must assume its responsibility with regard to Neo-Pentecostalism, and deal with it administratively, we urge Presbyteries so involved to gather not only factual but *interpretative* data. This should include first-hand evidence about Neo-Pentecostalism; its meaning for those involved in it; and its significance for the mission of the particular congregation.

6. Where a minister is following some Neo-Pentecostal practice, he should be counseled, if need be, to preach the fullness of the gospel (not only his Neo-Pentecostal interpretation of it), to minister to the needs of all his congregation, and as a presbyter to grow in understanding of our polity in the mission of the particular presbytery. Often ministers in difficulties, growing out of the Neo-Pentecostal experience, are newly ordained and are therefore in special need of the guidance and friendship of older presbyters.

7. Presbyteries may also be faced with a situation where there is a Neo-Pentecostal group within a congregation whose minister, or whose session, or both, may be hostile to or ignorant of Neo-Pentecostalism. Here we believe the presbytery has a pastoral responsibility to teach, mediate, and to guide in reconciliation.

8. Pray continuously for sensitivity to the will of, and the leading of, the Spirit.

*For Sessions*

1. Remember that in the United Presbyterian Church, the session is 'charged with maintaining the spiritual government of the congregation, for which purpose it has power to inquire into the knowledge and Christian conduct of the members of the church . . . . to concert the best measures for promoting the spiritual interests of the congregation' (Form of Government, Chapter XI, Section 6 (41.06)). Thus it is the session which must decide whether or not Neo-Pentecostal practices are appropriate for the particular congregation. It is important that the session members be knowledgeable concerning Neo-Pentecostalism in regard to both its dangers and its potential contributions for the congregation's spiritual life and mission. The fact that Neo-Pentecostalism may be new and different is not in itself adequate reason for repression.

2. When members of a particular congregation are involved in Neo-Pentecostal experiences, the session of such congregation needs to gain, on the part of the elders belonging to that session, a first-hand understanding of the meaning of the experience not only to those involved in it but also for members of the congregation outside Pentecostal experiences. This may be an excellent opportunity again to implement the spirit of reconciliation emphasized in our Confession of 1967.

3. If the minister is a Neo-Pentecostal, the elders should seek full understanding of what the experience means to him, their pastor. The elders should counsel with the pastor to maintain a balanced ministry to all members of the congregation.

4. Session members are reminded of the responsibility to maintain oversight of all groups within their own congregation.

Given these guidelines, the church and the neo-Pentecostal together, in unity of their common confession of Jesus as Lord, are yet required to ask one last, and perhaps most important question, a question which will determine if unity in diversity will be realized:

*Quo Vadis, Domine?*<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Translated: Which way, Lord.

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APPENDIX A  
REPORT OF THE EPISCOPAL STUDY  
COMMISSION ON GLOSSOLALIA

DIOCESE OF CALIFORNIA  
DIVISION OF PASTORAL SERVICES

220

Study Commission on Glossolalia

Preliminary Report

INTRODUCTION

Submitted to the Bishop May 2, 1963  
Released May 14, 1963

A. Composition of the Division

As constituted by the Bishop, the Committee is composed of the following members:

The Rev. John Ashey	The Rev. Charles Whiston
The Rev. Thomas Bogard	John W. Perry, M.D.
The Rev. David Forbes (Ch.)	Richard M. Sutherland, M.D.
The Rev. Trevor Hoy	Mrs. John Buenz
The Rev. Edward Hobbs	

Of the present constituency, Canon Forbes is chairman; Fr. Ashey is a parish priest who speaks "in tongues" and maintains a ministry to others who do so in his parish; Fr. Bogard is a parish priest not thus involved and who has undertaken graduate study in the behavioral sciences; Canon Hoy is Director of the Department of Education and actively involved in conferences and institutes where the group process gives some insight into human behaviour and motivations stripped of some of their usual defenses; Drs. Hobbs and Whiston are professors at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific specializing in Biblical Studies and Systematic Theology respectively; Drs. Perry and Sutherland are practicing psychiatrists, the latter, Consultant to the Diocese; and Mrs. Buenz is a layman who has completed doctoral work in the field of parapsychology.

It has been recommended that others might be co-opted for the Commission, so the membership as now constituted may well be added to in the future.

B. Plan

The Commission files this as a preliminary report and proposes to continue its work in what clearly is a subject requiring careful study in depth.

C. Nature of the Report

The report will cover the following subject areas:

- I. Statement of the Task
- II. Review of Present Situation
- III. Review of Existing Resource Material
  - A. Literature of those in the Movement
  - B. Studies by other groups and individuals

## C. cont.

## IV. Description of Glossolalia

## V. Review of Biblical Background

## A. Use of Scripture in the Movement

## B. The Scripture References

## C. Comment on these References

## VI. Psychological Aspects of Glossolalia

## VII. Conclusions and Recommendations

## I. STATEMENT OF THE TASK

Bishop Pike constituted this Commission as a study group to report to him on the nature and present status in the Church of glossolalia, and to make recommendations to assist him in setting diocesan policy on the subject.

This assignment has proven general indeed, for we have spent considerable time simply in defining and clarifying what we are to study and report on. We have felt hesitant to come to many conclusions. In the first place, the core of the problem lies in the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the ability to speak "in tongues", and here we can state no decision as finally authoritative. The most we can do is to suggest outer limits beyond which churchmen should move with great caution or not at all. In the second place, we do not pretend to have undertaken a scientific study of glossolalia even as a human phenomenon and realize that conclusions would require this. In the third place, those who speak in tongues are agreed that this action in itself is far less important than what they assert it signifies; namely, the conscious reception of the Holy Spirit and His continued activity in a person's life. A study which does not emphasize the larger question of the nature of all the gifts of the Spirit and their place in Christian life can only be preliminary and, we hope, clarifying.

At the start, therefore, the Commission wishes to emphasize, first, that it recognizes how large is the scope of its assignment thus understood, and, second, that this report is indeed preliminary. We shall appreciate comment and correction.

## II. REVIEW OF THE PRESENT SITUATION

## A. Background

Glossolalia, of course, has been a well-accepted element in the practice of the Pentecostal sects since late in the 19th Century. It is a phenomenon new, however, to the Episcopal Church and the other "main-line" denominations in the United States, although individual churchmen are reported to have been involved for many years.

Apparently its Episcopalian beginnings were in 1958 at the Church of the Holy Spirit, Monterey Park, California, and at Trinity Church, Wheaton, Illinois. In both instances it began among laymen and soon involved the clergy. It first received major publicity at St. Mark's Church, Van Nuys, California, where the rector and a number of laymen in the parish became involved. Controversy developed leading several months later to his resignation. Since that time, glossolalia has appeared in a number of dioceses scattered across the country.

In this diocese, the phenomenon has spread rapidly in the last two years to the point where now it is estimated that at least 12 clergy and more than 200 laity are actively involved.

## B. Its Practice in this Diocese

The manner in which two parishes in this diocese have used this ministry may illustrate some of the variety to be found throughout the Church in the use of glossolalia.

### 1. Parish "A"

Here a program has developed over a period of about a year where initially some lay people and the rector met once weekly in the Rectory for prayer, study, and fellowship. A variety of the gifts of the Holy Spirit are reported as having been experienced from time to time, including, of course, glossolalia. Most of those involved used tongues as part of their devotional life day by day. An active healing ministry featured this group's activity as well as prayers and hymns of praise and adoration both liturgical and non-liturgical. No-one was allowed to speak in tongues (except inaudibly) unless another felt moved to speak in interpretation.

Recently, the group's size and the feeling that the parish as a whole might resent "private" meetings of this sort led to the establishment of weekly programs in the parish church. These programs feature instruction on some aspect of the Christian life followed by a social period over coffee. A service follows of an informal nature with hymn singing, psalm reading, testimony by individuals as they feel moved as to the meaning of Christ in their life, and extemporary prayer shared by all as they feel moved. At the conclusion of the service, those who wish to remain form small prayer groups for both study and prayer with the manifestation of such gifts of the Spirit as tongues. At the conclusion of the evening individuals as they wish return to the Church for Unction, or for prayer for the "quickenings" of the power of the Spirit, or for a Blessing.

### 2. Parish "B"

In this parish there is a continuing ministry through small groups called together from time to time by the Rector, but here, too, the focus of the parish program is in a weekly public service of healing and intercession at which he is the officiant. Anyone in or out of his parish is encouraged to attend and all are encouraged to pray for the reception of the Holy Spirit into their life as this is represented by the experience of glossolalia. These services are attended by people of different denominational backgrounds who in many cases come from a considerable distance.

The services are emphasized as non-liturgical. The rector, for example, wears no special vestments, but simply his street garb with clerical collar. The service typically includes most or all of the following: familiar hymns; a Scripture reading with lay interpretation as well as clerical; psalm recitation; intercessions in litany form both for the ill and distressed and for the diocese and the church at large; informal testimonies of witness by members of the congregation as they feel moved; "praising the Lord, each in his own way" (some in tongues); a ceremony of healing at the altar rail where priest and laymen (who previously have "commissioned" one another by laying on of hands accompanied sometimes by glossolalia) lay hands on those who desire it; the bringing of a message in tongues with interpretation; and prayer with laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Spirit with glossolalia.

In November 1962 this parish sponsored a "Christian Advance" mission in co-operation with clergy and congregations of other denominations. It was given publicity in principal San Francisco newspapers. Its stated point is to bring people to a "baptism in the Holy Spirit", phraseology typical of the movement which we are studying. It might be noted that in the publicity the movement was described as "the greatest revival in the Church since the Reformation".

### III. SOURCES IN LITERATURE

A. The Commission has on file a Bibliography, largely Pentecostal in origin, on the subject of glossolalia and baptism in the Spirit. We shall be glad to share it with anyone desiring to make use of it. Episcopalian literature on the subject is scarce. The Blessed Trinity Society, Box 2422, Van Nuys, California, issues a handsome quarterly, The Logos, carrying a variety of articles on all phases of what is usually termed the "Pentecostal Experience". The Society also prints pamphlets available at nominal cost.

Also a periodical issued monthly is the Full Gospel Men's Voice, published by the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, 836 South Figueroa, Los Angeles 17, California. Persons of all denominations write for its pages.

B. The Diocese of Chicago on December 12, 1960, issued the Report of a special Commission appointed by Bishop Burrill to study this movement. It has been very helpful in preparing this Report.

A brief statement entitled "New Movements in the Church", and dealing with problems raised by the so-called "Pentecostal" movement in the Episcopal Church was issued by the House of Bishops in November 1962. Articles have appeared during the last 2 years in both secular and church periodicals.

C. Episcopalians within the movement have expressed their regret that little serious study has yet been made of the movement by churchmen involved in it. It is the lack of such study and of scholarly leadership that perhaps has forced Episcopalians involved back to understandings and vocabulary developed by the Pentecostal sects in a quite different theological and devotional milieu.



#### IV. DESCRIPTION OF GLOSSOLALIA WITHIN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

A considerable variety of experience is reported. It is agreed that there has been no systematic treatment of glossolalia within the Episcopal Church thus far, and that this is very much needed since without it people involved are turning to Pentecostal vocabulary and literature for help.

The remainder of this section should be understood to be a reporting of what the Commission has read and heard to be typical of the experience among Episcopalians. The phenomenon takes different forms among us, often different from that reported as typical of the Pentecostal groups whose activities are beyond the scope of our Report.

In any case, the issue of tongues is centered in its asserted relationship to the Holy Spirit and His reception and continued activity in a person's life. A distinction is usually drawn between the "sign-tongue", tongues as part of one's private prayer life, and the "gift of tongues".

Certain language is commonly used; it is said to be an experience of "surrender"; it is a "release" from anxiety and tension; it transmits the "power" of the Holy Spirit; it "transforms" all life including prayer, sacraments and personal relationships; it gives one a "warm full" feeling; its fruit is a "Spirit-filled" life; it gives a sense of "joy" and "happiness".

It is claimed by those involved to be a transforming experience which gives new life and a new meaning to Christian faith and practice. Many speak of how they have been enabled to save marriages and redeem family and business relationships because of the awareness of the Holy Spirit in their life. Others have given up smoking and drinking as mechanisms of release no longer needed. Some emphasize that it has given new meaning and depth to their worship life through the sacraments. All feel that their life before the experience by comparison was shallow and largely conventional in the degree of their commitment to God. In Episcopalian literature a distinction is commonly drawn between two baptisms; that is, "in water" and "in the Holy Spirit". Such terminology, of course, is drawn from Pentecostal sources, but some of our writers, at least, make it plain that while Confirmation is not necessarily equivalent to Baptism in the Holy Spirit, the latter ideally should be part and parcel of the former.

The three kinds of tongues can be described briefly in the terminology of the Movement within our Church as follows:

The sign-tongue is a normal part of baptism "in the Holy Spirit". As part of his surrender to the Holy Spirit, a person "gives" his tongue and voice as well as his heart and mind to Him. Speaking in tongues at this time, therefore, becomes, on the one hand, a sign that a person has made such a surrender, and, on the other hand, a sign that God has "filled" him. To quote a Trinity Movement pamphlet (#B102, p. 14), "It is undoubtedly possible that God could fill somebody with His Holy Spirit without this supernatural sign of the new language, but it is God's wisdom that there should be an objective sign".

The continuing use of tongues as a type of private prayer has as its key the distinction drawn between prayer with "the mind" and prayer in tongues where the mind must surrender its domination of the person. The former is usually called prayer "with the understanding" and the latter, "prayer in the Spirit". This latter is a prayer of praise and, as such, a fruit of the experience of union between God and the believer. Obviously no interpretation is needed for what here is essentially a facet of one's private prayer life intended for God alone. If practiced in public it would rarely be audible unless one were placed very close to the person involved. It might but need not involve a display of emotion, and, at least among some, can be begun and stopped more or less at will.

The "gift of tongues" involves speaking in tongues in public in order, according to some, to convey a message from God, and according to others, to speak to God. One may be moved to speak one night and not the next. One may, after so speaking, be moved to give an interpretation or, more commonly, another present may receive that gift for the occasion. It is suggested by the literature that, using St. Paul's categories, this sort of tongues plus interpretation can fulfill the same function as "prohecy", if the tongues involved is meant to convey a message from God to man.

According to a priest who was involved in the Movement in another diocese, in his experience more than 75% of those who receive the sign-tongue continue afterwards to use the gift of tongues.

What does tongues sound like? Again, two kinds must be distinguished. Most common is a "lalling" in a tongue without human counterpart. It usually has a more or less developed phonic structure as might be expected. According to those who use tongues, as one becomes practiced in its use, the "language" becomes more fluent. It stresses open vowels and a general lack of harsh gutturals, somewhat in the manner of Hawaiian or a southern Romance language. The other kind is far more rare, but that which receives the greater publicity; namely, the use by a person of a human language which he has not studied and could not "possibly" have learned. The literature abounds with examples where this is reported to have taken place. Obviously a special problem is raised by such cases and we have not undertaken sufficient study to deal with it in this Report.

One aspect of tongues is the question of "spirit possession". Does one become merely a mouthpiece for the Holy Spirit, or does one remain "in control?" Some claim to be able to choose when and whether to speak in tongues. All agree, however, that a measure of control is given up for what is said is not pre-determinable by the individual nor is he able to duplicate what he has said once he has finished. The Commission has no answer at this point to the question, but will comment further when speaking of its psychological aspects.

## A. Introduction

It will be obvious to all, of course, that Holy Scripture is subject to many interpretations. In the hands of a Pentecostalist a given passage may well be given far different treatment than at the hands of an Episcopalian who is trained to view it with a more critical eye. The problem of Literalism is a relevant one in our case because most lay persons involved in the use of tongues tend to treat the Bible in Literalist fashion. In a recent article, a prominent member of the Trinity Society exclaims with approval, "The Lord appears to be making a lot of Episcopalian Fundamentalists in these end time days". While Fundamentalism (meaning, here, Literalism) according to some is not necessary to the Biblical undergirding of the Movement, nevertheless it seems to be the most common approach to Scripture used.

In discussing the Biblical background of tongues with lay members of the Movement, therefore, one may expect to meet with this basic difficulty; namely, that the interpretation of the texts in question will be widely divergent simply because there may be underlying disagreement as to the authenticity of the text or its admissibility as evidence in the first place. A good example is St. Mark 16:17 which is widely quoted by those involved in tongues as being an approving reference by our Lord Himself to glossolalia. The text seems quite clear on the subject and on the face of it allows for little discussion. One versed in and believing in the use of Biblical criticism however, will hasten to point out that all available evidence points to the fact that this passage is not part of the original Gospel at all, nor even a part of the New Testament as originally canonized; hence this passage has scant claim either in dominical or canonical authority.

The members of the Commission point this out simply to give some perspective to the use of Scripture in relation to tongues. While not all Episcopalians would accept the results of Biblical Criticism, even if they were aware of its fruits, most scholarship in the Church does albeit in somewhat varying degree, and the Commission feels bound to follow their lead.

## B. The Scripture References

We need to concern ourselves with parts of four books of the New Testament, these being St. Mark, The Acts of the Apostles, Romans, and I Corinthians. We shall review the texts involved, summarizing them before adding some comments as to their relevance and validity as justification for the contemporary use of tongues.

In St. Mark, the text involved is 16:17, where Jesus mentions speaking "with new tongues" as one of the signs which "shall follow them that believe". This text, therefore, is taken to furnish dominical basis for the "sign-tongue", that which accompanies baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Of the several references in Acts to tongues, Acts 2:1-4, 8:14ff, 10:44-48, and 19:6, are taken as fulfillment of our Lord's promise of St. Mark 16:17. Acts 2:1-4, of course, is the story of Pentecost; and Acts 19, the story of baptism "in the Lord Jesus" at Ephesus. Acts 10:44-48, the story of the reception of the Holy Spirit by Gentiles at Caesaria; [Acts 8:14 ff, the story of a reception of the Holy Spirit at

Samaria which caused Simon to offer money for the power to act as did Peter and John]. In Acts 2:4 we read, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." In Acts 10:46 we read, "For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God". Acts 8 contains no mention of tongues, but it is assumed by those referring to it that only an observable and impressive sign of the reception of the Holy Spirit would have induced Simon to offer money for the power to "confer" Him! That sign, in the light of Acts 2 and 10 is taken to be speaking with tongues, Acts 19:1-6 recounts Paul's time at Ephesus when he talks with disciples there about their baptisms. When they say that they have been baptized only "unto John's baptism", he proceeds to baptize them "in the name of the Lord Jesus" after which (19:6) "they spake with tongues and prophesied".

In Romans, the passage to which reference is made is Chapter 8 which deals with the Holy Spirit in Christian life. In the 26th verse we read, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth us with our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we might: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" ("sighs too deep for words" in the Revised Standard Version). This is taken to refer to the language of the Spirit, or tongues, as over against normal speaking in our normal language. It is used particularly to refer to the use of tongues as a prayer of praise in one's private devotions.

The most extensive reference to tongues, and the only Biblical attempt to discuss it or evaluate it, is found in I Corinthians 12, 13, and 14. Here it appears as one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the Church. Chapter 12 lists the gifts of the Spirit, emphasizing, first, that all come of the one same Spirit in whom alone, one may say "Jesus is Lord". In the list, the last two are "divers kinds of tongues" and "the interpretation of tongues". Verse 28 lists some of the ministries which God has appointed in His Church, and, again, the last is "diversities of tongues". Verse 30 reads, "Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak in tongues? do all interpret?" Then we are exhorted to seek the "higher gifts" and then follows the famous "Ode to Love" in Chapter 13. Chapter 14 discusses tongues at length. Paul points out in verse 2 that in tongues one "is talking with God not with men" and, though "no doubt inspired ... speaks mysteries". This is contrasted with prophecy in which, Paul points out one's words, being understood, "have power to build". Then in verse 5 he commends speaking in tongues and, even more, prophecy, since the latter edifies the Church and the former only one's self. In verses 11 through 13 he suggests that he who speaks in tongues "pray also that he may interpret" since otherwise tongues will be "gibberish" (new English translation) to the hearer. Again the point is made that one should "aspire above all to excel in those (gifts) which build up the Church". In verse 15 Paul says he will pray and sing "in the spirit" (meaning "in tongues") and "with the understanding also".

After saying in verse 18 that he speaks with tongues "more than ye all", he adds at verse 17 that "in the Church" he would rather speak "five words with my understanding" than "10,000 words in an unknown tongue". In verses 23, 24, and 25 he points out that an unbeliever, entering a service where "all speak with tongues" will think them "mad", but, hearing prophecy in the same circumstance will be "convinced" and "worship God". Then, in verses 26ff, he sets the discipline that no more than "two".

or at the most ... three" speak in tongues "in turn", followed by interpretation. If no interpreter is present, then no tongues should be spoken except by one "to himself and to God"; i.e., silently. Then he concludes the Chapter in verses 39 and 40 by saying, "Wherefore, bretheren, covet to prophecy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order".

As a whole, then, Chapter 14 is clear; first, that all must be done so as to edify or build up the Church; second, that while Paul himself thanks God for the gift of tongues, he subordinates it to that speaking with understanding which will benefit others; third, "in the Church", that is, in public assembly, public use of tongues is destructive unless accompanied by interpretation; but, fourth, that tongues is not to be forbidden when used as he allows. No stricture whatsoever is placed on private use of tongues, and it is placed alongside "prayer with the understanding", the two complementing each other.

In Chapter 12, tongues clearly is given a place in the Church as a gift of the Holy Spirit. Chapter 13, situated, of course, between 12 and 14, serves with regard to the former to make clear that the greatest gift of the Spirit and "the higher way" is Love, and with regard to the latter that if love is to be advanced then discipline of the gift of tongues is essential to its continued use in public assembly.

To refer by title to the different uses of tongues distinguished by those in the movement, the "sign-tongue" is referred back to St. Mark 16:17 and to Acts 2, 8, 10, 19; tongues in private prayer, Romans 8:26 and I Corinthians 14: 3, 15, and 28; and "the gift of tongues" in public worship, I Corinthians 12 and the appropriate verses of 14 not mentioned above.

### C. Comment on Biblical References

1. St. Mark 16:17. With regard to St. Mark 16:17, it already has been noted that modern scholarship is agreed that it is neither part of the original Gospel according to St. Mark, nor was it part of that Gospel as later given canonical status. St. Jerome himself attacked it as spurious. Hence it can hardly have dominical status and its standing within the Canon is tenuous at best. It will be admitted that it may reflect the practice of tongues present at Corinth and elsewhere, but that is to assign to it no more than importance as historical information of questionable import and not as authoratative basis for the so-called "sign-tongue".

2. Acts. References to tongues in Acts all mention it as part of the initiatory process for Christians. In Acts 2 alone are the tongues stated as being understandable to others although the idiom in Acts 10:46 may also indicate this. In any case, all are related to the receiving of the Holy Spirit. A word is in order as to how the book is to be approached in the first place. Scholarship is agreed that Acts is written in the same vein as the Gospels. Its author is not so much concerned to report day-to-day actions of the Apostles as to weave a well-integrated and dramatic story in which the showing forth of the Good News comes first, and all materials are made subservient to this aim. Such a view cannot be taken to rule out the possibility that some or all of the

events portrayed in the book happened just as stated, but it is to say that to the author, historicity of this sort is not necessary to his purpose which is kerygmatic.

Speaking in tongues appears in the first great preaching of the Gospel and receiving of the Holy Spirit at Jerusalem (Acts 2); in the receiving of the Holy Spirit in Samaria (assuming Acts 8 does reflect glossolalia); in the much-emphasized story of the baptism of the God-fearing Gentiles at Caesaria (Acts 10); and in the story at Ephesus where the vital distinction is drawn between John the Baptist's baptism and Christian baptism.

It has been pointed out that these four events constitute key episodes in the ever-widening influence of the Gospel, from the Jewish community at Jerusalem to the Samaritans, to God-fearing Gentiles (that is, Gentiles closely associated with the Jewish religion), and, finally, to Gentiles in a Gentile city, Ephesus. It is a good example of how the author has used historical method to drive home the significance of Pentecost where in the power of the Holy Spirit nations of men are drawn together by Him. Whereas at Babel men lost their ability to communicate with one another, at Pentecost, in the faith of Christ and the power of His Holy Spirit, they regained that ability. Glossolalia becomes, therefore, a sign of the reconciliation between men made possible by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It should be noted that nowhere in Acts is tongues suggested as part of the ongoing life of the Christian. Also, tongues-speaking requires no interpretation since in Acts 2 and 8 it apparently is understood, while in the others, its presence in itself is what is important.

Finally it should be noted that the receiving of the Holy Spirit is never a private matter. It takes place in community and has as its fruit the widening of that community. The Holy Spirit is not akin to a pagan spirit conceived as an ethereal individual in search of a person vulnerable to possession. He is the Christian "esprit de corps", the Spirit indwelling the whole Body, in whom as we live together we participate in His communion.

### 3. Romans 8:26

Romans 8:26 cannot be taken as a trustworthy basis for tongues of any kind. The Greek words used in this verse, "stenagmois alaletois", mean un verbalized sighs or groans. While tongues usually are not in a human tongue they are verbal patterns because they consist of words and languages. In fact it will be noted that the root of the verb-form in this phrase, "lal" is the same as in glossolalia, while the prefix "a" is a negative. Hence it is highly unlikely that reference to any tongue is here meant. Unspoken or wordless prayer, on the other hand, provides a rich part of every committed Christian's devotional life, and it is to this that the passage has immediate and appropriate reference.

### 4. I Corinthians

In I Corinthians, Paul speaks to a church which has been characterized as "one of the most erratic and troublesome" of his missions. In the letter he speaks out against a number of pagan practices from which he seeks to wean them insofar as they

militate against life in Christ.

Chapters 12 to 14 constitute a discussion of the Holy Spirit and his gifts to the Church and their use in it. Quite apart from his discussion on tongues per se, Paul makes these central points: first, those who confess "Jesus is the Lord", do so in the power of the Holy Spirit; second, there is a variety of ways in which the power of the Spirit is manifested in the Church, but all of them issue from the same Spirit; third, all are exhorted to seek out the "best" gifts and above all to follow the more excellent way at the heart of which is love. Paul is not suggesting that there need be a fundamental conflict between the gifts of Chapter 12 and the way of faith, hope and love. But he is insisting that the exercise of any ministry of the Spirit in the Church must take place in such a way as to advance love ("though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal"). Chapter 14 spells out the meaning of this, everywhere equating "edifying" or "building up" the Church with acting in the spirit of love. Part of the "more excellent way" is to build up the Church.

Evidently he considers vital the distinction between public and private use of tongues. He who speaks privately in tongues, "speaketh unto God" and "edifieth himself", and so is not to be condemned. But when tongues is to be spoken in public, then the way of love demands that this ministry of the Spirit be carefully channeled and disciplined. All speaking in assembly should edify hence he would "rather that ye prophesied" or, in any case, have interpretation when tongues is spoken.

His conclusion of the matter, "covet to prophesy and forbid not to speak with tongues", clearly provides for the latter and yet can hardly be considered an enthusiastic or unqualified endorsement of it. In public, at least, it is prophecy which is to be sought after and coveted, not tongues.

## 5. Conclusion

This section has dealt with the Biblical references to glossolalia. In casting doubt on the use of the Marcan and Acts of references as "proof-texts" for contemporary tongues-speaking, we do not thereby cast doubt upon the reality and the meaningfulness of what obviously is a transforming experience for a number of our Christian brethren.

As a part of the initiatory process of entering the Christian community, as part of one's ongoing private devotional life, and as one aspect of public worship, albeit carefully limited, glossolalia has biblical precedent, even if there is no scriptural warrant for making it normative for all Christians then or now.

At least some Episcopalians involved in the Movement feel the need to free themselves from a Literalist approach to the Bible and we encourage them in leading their brethren in that direction. As long as the approach to Scripture does not "stretch" the valid use of texts and recognizes the complexity of Biblical exegesis and interpretation, then we can appreciate the need and desire of Christians to return time and again to its pages feeling confident that thereby they will be led in the Spirit to insights helpful to their present experience.

## A. Introduction

The Committee has spent much of its time discussing this aspect of the subject. The presence of two psychiatrists and an expert in parapsychology has provided a resource which both encourages scientific study and suggests healthy caution in it! At this point, however, we emphasize again that this Report indeed is preliminary and tentative in its conclusions. We realize that this aspect of the Study cannot produce in itself a theological value judgment. On the other hand, whether the Pentecostalist movement within our Church be of God or not, it definitely is of Man and hence susceptible to study and analysis which can clarify ambiguities, relate the phenomenon to other types of human behavior, and dispel unfounded suspicions and opinions.

## B. Glossolalia as Psychological Phenomenon

Glossolalia is not per se a religious phenomenon. That is to say, glossolalic phenomena in their sound and psychological effect identical to the Christian experience can appear in a non-religious context. Our psychiatrists point out that the term "surrender" used so often by Pentecostalists in connection with tongues-speaking, is a familiar one to them. The Christian speaks of surrender to God the Holy Spirit; the psychiatrist speaks of the surrender of the rational and conscious to the "irrational" or "transrational" and unconscious. Of course, the former speaks of surrender to the person of God and the latter to part of his inner-life but there need be no contradiction between the two concepts and, indeed, they might well be quite in harmony. The action of surrender may bring, psychologically speaking, a true sense of release and freedom. All that Christian tongue-speakers say of their experience strikes a familiar note to the psychiatrist. He can well understand how transforming an experience glossolalia might be, and how helpful it could be as an act of release periodically practiced. Both of our psychiatrists point out that much of our religious life as Episcopalians is so externalized and formalized that all too easily we become spiritually strait-jacketed. The phrase, "God's frozen people" apparently has serious emotional overtone as well as evangelistic! Without judging whether glossolalia be of God or not, our psychiatrists sense that it could be for some a healthy outlet, freeing and enlarging religious life.

Lest this be taken as blanket support for glossolalia, however, serious qualification must be made. In its non-religious manifestations it appears among adults who are suffering from mental disorders such as schizophrenia and hysteria. Here it serves as a release necessary due to the tensions of the illness. We do not suggest that Christians who speak in tongues therefore must be mentally disordered! We do point out, however, that glossolalia is not necessarily healthy or wholesome in a given person's life. Its "goodness" or "badness" for an individual depends upon his ability to harmonize it with his other experience; that is, to be integrated as part of him as he lives in society. They also point out that there is a significant difference between the person who can "decide" to indulge in glossolalia and then withdraw from it at will, and the one whose conscious is overwhelmed by his unconscious until sufficient release has taken place. The latter hardly could be considered as in emotional good health. As indicated elsewhere the degree of self-control really open to those who use glossolalia as part of their religious life has not received close scrutiny, although some of those involved testify that they are able so to control it.



Canon Hoy points out, incidentally, that the freedom which comes "when people are freed to be themselves" is from the Church's point of view enriching, illuminating, and a fertile field for the operation of the Holy Spirit. He makes the further point that in thus freeing people glossolalia may have in part as an end result the same sort of effect as some of the deep interpersonal encounters which the Church has provided in her Leadership Skills Institutes, Group Life Laboratories and Parish Life Conferences where unguarded encounter in small groups provides the basis for all that goes on. Anyone familiar with these workshops recognizes, of course, that the key to their success is the sort of encounter which allows a participant to relax his defenses and share his deeper feelings more openly than he could in normal situations. But the purpose of such experiences is to increase the depth of community and communication between persons. "Training" in human relations, however, by no means claims to control behavior - or "condition" response. Rather it takes seriously the wide variety of learnings which may occur in any group where the guidance of the Holy Spirit is primary and sub-conscious as well as conscious influences are recognized. In drawing this parallel, however, Canon Hoy goes on to remind us that the reason for such freeing of a person in the case of these institutes and laboratories is to gain helpful insights, and to work a freely chosen transformation of life in the participant.

In this connection, those familiar with the group dynamics process in and out of the Church are all too well aware that not all persons benefit from involvement in it. They customarily exercise as much control as possible to prevent such persons' enrollment in their conferences and institutes.

To return then to glossolalia, psychologically speaking, we are faced with a phenomenon which may be either an unhealthy element within personality or a creative influence freeing one to grasp new insights and to change a way of life for the better. Certainly, scientific study might produce needed guidance on the subject in this regard.

### C. Suggestibility

The question of suggestion and especially auto-suggestion as part of the glossolalia experience has been raised. Tongues-speaking frequently<sup>is</sup> induced or at least is prefaced by repetition of some key phrase such as "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus". Moreover, prayer for baptism of the Holy Spirit with the sign-tongue usually comes at the end of a time of testimony and prayer together and therefore, after considerable emotional involvement, if not display. Might this act as suggestion or as a type of hypnosis? When used by the individual in private prayer can such repetition act as sort of an auto-suggestion? Further study of this aspect of glossolalia might clarify the means by which it is or can be induced. It might thereby indicate that certain types of personality are more apt to speak in tongues than others.

### D. Spirit Possession

Earlier in the Report (IV) the question of demonic possession was raised. Is one "possessed" who speaks in tongues? With quite different reasons, the tongues-speaker and the scientist could answer "Yes". To the former, glossolalia indeed is a sign that one is "possessed" by the Holy Spirit - has received Him and been indwelt by Him. One cannot speak in tongues, he would say, without God's action - it is . . .

the Holy Spirit who "utters prayers through us in His own way" (B.T. Socy. pamphlet B 102, p. 13). Such possession as this is, however, something to which the person willingly and eagerly surrenders, according to their testimony. Possession is involved in tongues-speaking according to the scientist, too. It may be a loose use of the term, but we who are unversed in psychiatric terminology might say that the person becomes "possessed" by his unconscious, which temporarily takes control of the voice and tongue from the conscious and rational. Obviously possession by the Holy Spirit is quite different from incursion of the conscious by unconscious processes, if only because in the former case, there is, so to speak, an encounter with an outside "person", God, while in the latter, there is a "civil war" with the personality with the tide of battle going first one way and then the other.

As a religious phenomenon, glossolalia, of course, is not Christian in origin. It was widespread in the mystery religions; it is referred to by Plato, Virgil, Plutarch, and early Egyptian writers. In all cases it is a sign that one has been possessed by one God or another. Dr. Nes in the Chicago Report attributes the reference in I Corinthians 12 to the contradictory assertions, "Jesus is anathema" and "Jesus is the Lord" to Paul's belief that other spirits than God may possess a person. "Possession" in one way or another, therefore, is closely involved in glossolalia according to those involved and those who observe it. In further studies we may be able to clarify its role and nature if not form conclusions about it.

#### E. Glossolalia as the Language of the Irrational

One last aspect of this phenomenon needs comment. Although critical investigation casts doubt on the use of Romans 8:26 as a proof text for a tongue provided by the Holy Spirit, it does reflect what many Christians know; namely, how we all feel the inadequacy of our verbalized prayers in praising and adoring God. I Corinthians 14:15 is taken by some to show that Paul believed in two kinds of prayer, "with the understanding" and "in the spirit". Such an interpretation, if true, again would reflect a felt need for language of prayer transcending the rational and expressing more adequately what our psychiatrists term the "Irrational"

A writer for the Pentecostalist Movement within the Episcopal Church says, "Because our own language is simply inadequate for the praise and adoration of God, He gives us a new language which is adequate" (op cit). Our psychiatrists' reaction to this in general is affirmative, for they point out that our deepest feelings and convictions with their roots in the subconscious, seldom can be adequately articulated by the conscious.

Referring again to the group dynamic process, those familiar with the sort of learning which goes on within it know how hard it is for the participant to articulate satisfactorily what he has learned. The more life-changing the insight gained, the more the person treasures this insight for others, and yet, the more frustrating becomes the problem of communication. We all know how poetry by its ability to communicate through emotional or dramatic tone goes beyond verbalization for its power. The language of music is yet another means by which emotions can more fully be expressed than through verbalization.

Again the scientist's research cannot determine whether it is the Holy Spirit Who provides the language of the glossolalist or not, but he can affirm that the need for expression beyond normal verbalization is a wholesome part of a normal person's life. To satisfy it is to enrich life so long as the means itself is not self-destructive.

## VII CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This Report has been largely descriptive as befits a preliminary one, and has been based upon available literature, first and second-hand observation of glossolalia, and the testimony of clergy and laymen involved. We stress that the reaction of others to the Report as well as further study may well correct what is here said either by correction, addition, or omission.

The presence of glossolalia as an aspect of a growing movement within the Episcopal Church is obvious. Those involved claim that it is "of God" and potentially the most transforming movement of the Holy Spirit since the Reformation. All agree that tongues-speaking is of significance only as a sign of or gift from the Holy Spirit. In a sense, therefore, it is the life of the Spirit within the Church which really is at issue. The need for the Church to consider anew the nature of His workings among us is undoubted and acknowledged on all sides. Nevertheless glossolalia, claimed as one aspect of those workings, is for the Episcopal Church, at least, so "different" and so liable to bring controversy that we are forced to give it in particular more attention than some of its users might feel it merits.

We have noted three types of glossolalia as its proponents distinguish them. Their use of Scripture to justify these types we have not accepted entirely because we have difficulty accepting in all cases their conclusions about the texts involved. Nevertheless the categories are as follows: the Sign-tongue, the tongue of praise in private prayer, and the "gift of tongues" for use with the gift of Interpretation in assembly. All glossolalia has in common as its prerequisite a surrender of the "understanding" and a giving over of the voice and tongue to God, the Holy Spirit. The fruit of such surrender may be a growing sense of freedom accompanied by a feeling of deep joy and a direct communion with God. The further fruit may be a transformed life freed of old anxieties and insecurities and newly committed to God.

The presence among us of the Movement under study poses several potential dangers and raises issues which need to be faced both by those within the Movement and those in the Church at large. We list these below discussing each one from these two viewpoints, pair by pair:

### A. Vocabulary and Theology

1. One important limitation within the Movement is the lack of theological approach to glossolalia and the other gifts of the Spirit growing out of this Church's understanding of Christian faith and practice. As a result the interpretation of the experience of the Holy Spirit is couched in a vocabulary almost wholly borrowed from the Pentecostal sects. Without judging the suitability of that

vocabulary for them, it has theological consequences for us in that it does not take into account the emphasis on God's action through the sacraments and the ordered liturgical life which we share with the historic churches of Christendom. If the Movement is to continue peaceably within the Episcopal Church it needs to come to terms with our ethos, not only in vocabulary but also in theology.

2. On the other hand, the foreign nature of the vocabulary and spirit of this Movement itself has dramatized how narrow and formalized many Episcopalians' approach to God is. At times we seem to have Him so "captured" by our sacramental rites that His ability to speak and act as He wishes is ignored or forgotten. We need surely to face afresh the working of the Holy Spirit and to give our people better opportunity to meet Him and receive Him in power in whatever way He chooses.

#### B. View and Use of Scripture

1. Closely allied to "A.I.", but of special importance is the Literalist approach to Scripture which is so dominant among the laity in the Movement. In a day when informed people are only just re-acquiring a respect for the Revelation of God in and through Scripture as understood in the light of biblical criticism any large-scale return to Literalism may well impede rather than aid the operation of the Holy Spirit. Leadership is needed which accepts the fruits of biblical scholarship while yet seeking to be instructed by God through the record of Scripture.

2. On the other hand, the Church needs to be reminded that biblical criticism is justified only in making the Bible more clearly a channel of Grace for God the Holy Spirit. In their wholehearted if naive acceptance of the biblical record as verbally inspired, Literalists at least affirm that the Bible is primarily a means of grace through which the Word of God is mediated to the faithful reader. By their attention to Scripture they also rebuke the great number of Episcopal congregations where serious Bible study is totally ignored by both clergy and laity!

Further it is at least possible that the Literalism of Episcopalian laity which surely is far more widespread than in just our own Pentecostalist Movement, is due in large measure to the failure of our clergy to share the outlook and fruits of Biblical Criticism with them in our use of Scripture be it in sermon or bible class.

1. Again, due perhaps to its birth in the Pentecostal sects, the Movement in the Episcopal Church can lead to an unhealthy subjectivism in religion. It is always a mistake to confuse a feeling of God's presence with His presence; a feeling of being saved with being saved. God's presence and His salvation are far surer than our feelings about it. In particular, the distinction between the conferring of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation and "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" with its feeling of His power in theologically dubious and all-too-easily destructive of one's faith in the reality of God's action in the sacrament. From the psychological point of view, an overly subjective orientation to religion, especially when related to emotionalism, is unhealthy in that it hinders the development of a personality well-balanced in its view of itself and its relationship to the objective realities of life.

2. The other side of the coin is that the Episcopal Church only too obviously tends to over-formalize and over-objectify the workings of God. Our over reliance on the externals of worship life does indeed "freeze" the faith and hinders a whole-hearted commitment to God as Lord and Saviour of my life as well as my bretheren's. In this regard we need to hear and perceive what the Holy Spirit may be saying to us through this Movement's stressing of the need for the individual's conscious sharing in His indwelling Presence within the Church.

#### D. Self-righteousness

1. A clear danger in this and any minority movement within the Church is the rise of self-righteousness or a sense of spiritual superiority. It seems apparent that the Corinthian Church was thus divided. St. Paul's emphasis on the Holy Spirit as equally the source for any and all ministries within the Church and his insistence that in all things love be the sine qua non of all Christian living surely are intended to condemn self-righteousness as destructive to the one Body of Christ. Leonard Hodgson,<sup>in</sup> a recent unpublished letter, reminds us, "For the question of spiritual status and progress what one has to look to is whether one is growing in a humble and contrite heart and love towards God and neighbor". With this sentiment responsible leadership in the Pentecostalist Movement will agree, of course, but the danger remains and needs to be clearly stated where speaking in tongues as a sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit is stressed. As helpful as it may be for some, it must not be taken as necessary to Christian commitment and life in the Spirit, nor necessary as a sign

## D. Self Righteousness - cont.

of spiritual progress or status. Again it is Leonard Hodgson who reminds us that we cannot "dictate to the Holy Spirit"!

2. As obvious as the danger is, it is no more likely to be present than an ignorant out-of-hand condemnation by churchmen of glossolalia and, in fact, of all religious experience out of the ordinary and conventional. There is present among us a contempt too commonly held whose ingredients are a protective concern for externalized religion, a fear of overt emotional expression, and a very real snobbery towards anything smacking of the Pentecostal sects. Love is no more present in such attitudes and in the resulting persecution of tongues-speakers (which indeed can be documented) than in any suspected self-righteousness on the latter's part. We all need to look to the growth of love toward God and neighbor as the only sure sign of spiritual progress. In particular, the Church at large in its approach to those who speak in tongues is as bound by the way of love as are the latter.

## E. Participation in the Common Prayer of the Church

1. One further danger comes to mind and that is the temptation born of the joy and sense of fulfillment in the experience of tongues to find in this rather than in the ordered liturgical life of the whole Church the central expression of one's worship. For all its formality and frequent lack of spirit, it is the Prayer Book round of weekly eucharist and daily choir offices in which we are called to participate and to symbolize and perfect our unity in the Holy Spirit. There is ample testimony from the Movement that many have found "baptism in the Holy Spirit" with its attendant experience a gate through which to enter the sacramental life of the Church more fully and meaningfully than ever before. Yet we think it will be necessary to stress continually the centrality of the sacraments as sure and sufficient means of grace for any who enter into them with faith in Jesus as Lord. In particular, the problem of the relationship of Confirmation to "Baptism in the Holy Spirit" is already present. Reports coming to us are that some within the Movement give little weight to the former unless it is immediately and observably connected with the latter. It should be added that at least some Episcopalians in the Movement agree that we need to work for the situation where people will understand "Confirmation as the time when the 'Baptism in the Holy Spirit' is to be received" (B.T. Pamphlet B 102 p. 6). In other words, it is being said that the administration of the sacrament of Confirmation needs again to be the time for our people when in faith in the Lord Jesus Christ they truly accept the Holy Spirit in all His proffered strength into their life. With such a hope

there can be no disagreement, so long as a particular manifestation of His Presence such as glossolalia is not taken as normative. It certainly should not lead to a denial of the real and dynamic action of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation.

2. All that has been noted in "C.2." above, applies here, of course. No-one suggests that what is offered by God through the sacrament redounds to one's spiritual growth or benefit without at least the germ of Christian faith. The sacramental life for too many Episcopalians is either ignored or treated with polite and uncommitted lip-service. For such churchmen we must find a way to bring them to an inner reliance awareness of their need for God's strength and an attendant/ upon the life faith, sacraments included, as the means to receive that strength. Certainly the occasions of Holy Baptism and Confirmation could be far more effectively used as means to this end by most of us.

## F. Conclusions

Several conclusions are embodied in the section above; namely, leaders in the Movement within our Church need to develop an acceptable vocabulary and theology for it; they need to face the biblical background with full awareness and acknowledgment of biblical criticism of the texts involved; they must be warned against an undue emphasis upon a subjectivism which equates being saved with the feeling of being saved; all churchmen need to be warned against a breach of that rule of love which is to govern all our dealings one with another, whether that breach be caused by self-righteousness or ignorant condemnation; all need to be reminded that, as in centuries past, Christians in faith are to find the focus of their worship life in the ordered sacramental life of the Church; finally, they all need to be recalled to the centrality of that personal relationship to Jesus Christ in the community of the Holy Spirit which alone gives basis to all that we pray and do.

In addition we are agreed that where it is practiced in love and faith by churchmen who retain their loyalty to the doctrine and discipline of their church, their use of tongues in private devotions can hardly be denied. At this stage in our inquiry we would add that it should not be denied, since at least some testimony indicates that it has meaning and brings progress in Christian faith and practice.

It is more difficult to recommend policy regarding public use of glossolalia. The Episcopal Church states its policy regarding Public Worship on page vii of the Book of Common Prayer. It lists the Orders for Holy Communion, Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and the Litany "as set forth in this Book" as the "regular Services appointed for Public Worship". It makes two further provisions as follows: first, in addition to the above services, other devotions taken from the Prayer Book or from Holy Scripture, or "set forth by lawful authority within this Church" may be used at the Minister's discretion "subject to the direction of the Ordinary"; second, such devotions

may be used "in place of" Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer "in Mission Churches or Chapels, and also, when explicitly authorized by the Ordinary, in Cathedrals or Parish Churches or other places ... when the edification of the Congregation so requires".

Whatever meaning these provisions have, it is clear that the Ordinary has authority and responsibility to determine the nature and content of non-Prayer Book services. In their conduct and use, the Minister is required to seek the direction of the Bishop. The Episcopal Church characteristically enforces this provision with considerable latitude and in differing degree from diocese to diocese. Where the use of a particular non-Prayer Book service is apt to cause controversy, however, the Bishop well may feel duty-bound to assume sufficient direction over it to satisfy himself that it is expressive of the Gospel as received and taught by this branch of Christ's Church as well as conducive to its upbuilding. With this in mind, therefore, we recommend to the Bishop that he assume such direction of public services involving glossolalia, as the Prayer Book expects of him, both for the sake of the Church at large and those directly involved in the Movement.

The Pentecostalist Movement is in such flux within the Episcopal Church at this time that we think considerable flexibility needs to be maintained in settling policy for these public services. On the other hand, because they are public, they need to be subject to discipline now as in St. Paul's day. His concern that all public worship "build up" or "edify" is as essential today as then. Our Church provides freedom but not license in worship, and any congregation has a responsibility to all their brethren as well as to God not to offend charity or conscience. Where they do not show such responsibility our Church expects that the Bishops will guide them or require them to do so.

We trust that our clergy will be aware of the great responsibility that is theirs in leading the congregations "committed to their charge" in this matter. If charity is to rule the life of the Church, surely the clergy will be instrumental in advancing its reign. If they react to the Pentecostalist Movement, and glossolalia in particular, only in suspicion and unthinking rejection, laymen generally will be quick to follow their lead. If clergy involved in the Movement teach that glossolalia is the essential sign of God's presence and that those lacking it are in any sense second-rate citizens in His Kingdom, then their laity, again, will be only too quick to express the same belief in their relationship to the brethren. We hope the Bishop will commend this matter to his clergy with emphasis.

We conclude by stating again that we welcome comment, correction, and all constructive criticism. We wish to study the Movement further as the Bishop directs, hoping thereby to achieve greater understanding, and consequently, further conclusions regarding its place, and that of glossolalia in particular, in the life of the Episcopal Church.

The Rev. John Ashe  
The Rev. Thomas Bogard  
Mrs. John Buenz

The Rev. Edward Hobbs    The Rev. Charles Whiston  
The Rev. Trevor Hoy  
John W. Perry, M.D.  
The Rev. David Forbes, Chairman    Richard M. Sutherland, M.D.



## APPENDIX B

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON DOCTRINE OF THE  
NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS ON  
THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT IN THE CATHOLIC  
CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

## REPORT OF THE AMERICAN BISHOPS\*

*The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church  
in the U.S.A.*

Beginning in 1967, the so-called Pentecostal movement has spread among our Catholic faithful. It has attracted especially college students. This report will restrict itself to the phenomenon among Catholics. It does not intend to treat classic Pentecostalism as it appears in certain Protestant ecclesial communities.

In the Catholic Church the reaction to this movement seems to be one of caution and somewhat unhappy. Judgments are often based on superficial knowledge. It seems to be too soon to draw definitive conclusions regarding the phenomenon and more scholarly research is needed. For one reason or another the understanding of this movement is colored by emotionalism. For this there is some historical justification and we live with a suspicion of unusual religious experience. We are also face to face with socially somewhat unacceptable norms of religious behavior. It should be kept in mind that this phenomenon is not a movement in the full sense of the word. It has no national structure and each individual prayer meeting may differ from another.

Many would prefer to speak of it as a charismatic renewal. In calling it a Pentecostal movement we must be careful to dis-associate it from classic Pentecostalism as it appears in Protestant denominations, such as the Assemblies of God, the United Pentecostal Church, and others. The Pentecostal movement in the Catholic Church is not the acceptance of the ideology or practices of any denomination, but likes to consider itself a renewal in the spirit of the first Pentecost. It would be an error to suppose that the emotional, demonstrative style of prayer characteristic of the Protestant denominations has been adopted by Catholic Pentecostals. The Catholic prayer groups tend to be quiet and somewhat reserved. It is true that in some cases it has attracted emotionally unstable people. Those who come with such a disposition usually do not continue. Participants in these prayer meetings can also exclude them. In this they are not always successful.

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\*Report of the Committee on Doctrine of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops submitted to the bishops in their meeting in Washington, D.C., Nov. 14, 1969. The report was presented by Bishop Alexander Zaleski of Lansing, Michigan, Chairman of the Committee. [This report was excerpted from Edward L. O'Connor, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1971), pp. 291-293.]

It must be admitted that theologically the movement has legitimate reasons for existence. It has a strong biblical basis. It would be difficult to inhibit the work of the Spirit which manifested itself so abundantly in the early Church. The participants in the Catholic Pentecostal movement claim that they receive certain charismatic gifts. Admittedly, there have been abuses, but the cure is not a denial of their existence but their proper use. We still need further research on the matter of charismatic gifts. Certainly, the recent Vatican Council presumes that the Spirit is active continuously in the Church.

Perhaps our most prudent way to judge the validity of the claims of the Pentecostal Movement is to observe the effects on those who participate in the prayer meetings. There are many indications that this participation leads to a better understanding of the role the Christian plays in the Church. Many have experienced progress in their spiritual life. They are attracted to the reading of the scriptures and a deeper understanding of their faith. They seem to grow in their attachment to certain established devotional patterns such as devotion to the real presence and the rosary.

It is the conclusion of the Committee on Doctrine that the movement should at this point not be inhibited but allowed to develop. Certain cautions, however, must be expressed. Proper supervision can be effectively exercised only if the bishops keep in mind their pastoral responsibility to oversee and guide this movement in the Church. We must be on guard that they avoid the mistakes of classic Pentecostalism. It must be recognized that in our culture there is a tendency to substitute religious experience for religious doctrine. In practice we recommend that bishops involve prudent priests to be associated with this movement. Such involvement and guidance would be welcomed by the Catholic Pentecostals.

APPENDIX C

A LETTER TO ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS ENQUIRING  
ABOUT THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT

Pentecost Week, 1970

To Roman Catholic priests enquiring  
about the Pentecostal Movement:

For many years, the so-called Pentecostal movement<sup>1</sup> was regarded as a phenomenon of the non-Catholic world. Within the past few years, however, it has appeared among Catholics all over the United States, from Boston to Miami, from Chicago to New Orleans, from Seattle to Los Angeles. Priests, nuns, and laymen have embraced it, and have found it to be good, holy and thoroughly Catholic in its essential inspiration. But there are also many, especially among those who have had no first-hand experience of it, who are wondering about its genuineness. This letter is designed to communicate to my fellow priests the observations I have been able to make, in the hope of helping them form at least a tentative judgment.

I became acquainted with this movement when it reached Notre Dame in March of 1967 from Pittsburgh. I have been observing it carefully ever since, and have been most favorably impressed by it. In several people whom I know personally, a very striking moral reformation has been brought about as the direct result of its influence. They have been freed from drunkenness, drug addiction, and other evils which they had not had the strength to shake off of themselves. I have seen the peace of God descend almost visibly upon souls that were troubled, and unsnarl lives that were impossibly tangled.

But even more impressive to me has been the effect of this movement on people who were already good to start with. It has given them a fervor and a depth of spirituality which had previously been quite unknown to them. It has brought them a living conviction about the reality of God, and a sense of His presence, producing a lively trust in Him, a readiness to give Him all, and an ability to pray to Him with fervor and love and faithfulness the like of which I had seldom previously observed even among religious, let alone lay people. Their faith has been transformed by a new joy and liveliness.

One of the most reliable proofs that this is an authentically Christian renewal lies in the fact that it does not lead people to cast aside the traditional practices of their religion. On the contrary, it gives them in a very striking way a greater love of the Blessed Sacrament, profounder devotion at Mass, an inclination to go to confession more frequently and fervently, and frequently a wonderful new appreciation of Our Lady's role in the Christian life. Furthermore, the people influenced by this movement seem in general to be much more receptive towards the teaching and laws of the Church than the ordinary Catholic.

It is the things that I have just mentioned which seem to me the most important in this movement. However, that which attracts most attention because of its spectacularity has been the occurrence of charisms, such as speaking in unknown tongues, prophecy, and the "discernment of spirits." Such manifestations will naturally put any prudent man on his guard for fear of illusion or diabolical intervention. However, I think I have been as cautious as anyone in investigating these things, and have come to the conclusion that they all correspond plainly to what St. Paul taught in I Corinthians, chapters 2, 12, 13 and 14. Furthermore, the Vatican Council itself reminded us that we must be prepared to encounter the dramatic and extraordinary charisms, just as well as the ordinary ones: "The Holy Spirit, who sanctifies the People of God through the ministry and sacraments, gives to the faithful special gifts as well . . . . From the reception of these charisms or gifts, including those which are less dramatic, there arises for each believer the right and duty to use them in the church and in the world for the good of mankind and for the up-building of the church. In so doing, believers need to enjoy the freedom of the Holy Spirit who 'breathes where He wills.'" (See also Karl Rahner's The Charismatic Element in the Church.)

This shows that the Pentecostal movement is not an innovation. It is the simple fulfillment of Christ's own teaching, for example in chapters 3, 4, 7 and 14-16 of the Gospel of St. John. It is a renewal indeed, but a renewal of that which the Acts of the Apostles show us taking place from the beginning. It is a renewal that seems to have come in answer to the prayer of Pope John: "May the Divine Spirit deign to answer in a most comforting manner the prayer that rises daily to Him from every corner of the earth: 'Renew your wonders in our time, as though for a new Pentecost...'" (Humanae salutis, Christmas 1961)

For some priests, the fact that this movement began in the Protestant world may appear as a sign that it cannot be genuinely Catholic. However, Vatican II itself declares that non-Catholic Christians "are in some real way joined with us in the Holy Spirit, for to them also He gives His gifts and graces, and is thereby operative among them with His sanctifying power." (Constitution on the Church, #15) I wonder if the Good Shepherd has not gone seeking those who, through no fault of their own, have been separated from His flock. Perhaps it is because they have no opportunity to receive the sacraments that He has poured out His Spirit on them in merciful abundance. And to us Catholics also, He may be teaching the lesson that "God can raise up children to Abraham out of these very stones." Perhaps it is largely because of our indifference and complacency, in the midst of all our sacramental and liturgical riches, that the Holy Spirit often seems to be so inactive among us. I wonder if God is not now telling us, "Many will come from the East and the West and will feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but the children of the kingdom will be put forth into the darkness outside."

It is true that the non-Catholic Pentecostals are often vociferous and sometimes even vicious in their attacks on the Catholic Church. In most cases, however, I believe that this is simply a mentality they have inherited from their past, and not something which the Pentecostal Movement has given them. Their enthusiasm for the things of God makes them all the more vigorous in their opposition to what they sincerely believe is the enemy of God; but most of them also have a deep spirit of love that leads them to drop this violence as soon as they come into genuine personal contact with living Catholics. Often they have a certain openness of mind that quickly learns to appreciate and even accept many of the positions that we hold dear. It is the view of many religious historians, moreover, that Pentecostalism is by no means a branch of Protestantism, but is rather a

"third force" in the Christian world. Personally, I am inclined to think that it is the result of an action of God once again "preparing for Himself a perfect people." By what steps this people will ultimately attain the unity that Christ intended for His flock, I have no idea; but I have seen the Pentecostal Movement do more to foster ecumenical understanding in a short while than theological conversations have accomplished over a long period of time.

Finally, some people object that the Pentecostal spirit is too emotional. I would agree that in many non-Catholic Pentecostal churches, the emotional factor is excessive. However, on this point we must be very understanding. These churches have not the sacraments and liturgy that we have; they have almost nothing else but the wonderful experience of the presence of God which has profoundly affected them, and which they seek to refresh and to communicate by every means possible. They are not greatly to blame if in this effort they sometimes get too emotional. It should not surprise us if their naive efforts lack the balance that we owe to the institutional Church and to our traditions. And in fact, where the Pentecostal Movement has reached Catholics, it has been far more calm in its manifestations. On the other hand, isn't it possible that we Catholics (especially in the Anglo-American world) have been unnaturally unemotional in our style of worship? Why shouldn't people be deeply moved at the moments when God floods them with the wonderful sense of His presence and goodness?

In speaking of all the good I have seen in the Pentecostal movement, I do not mean to deny that there are dangers connected with it. The very energy and enthusiasm that it releases can indeed be dangerous if it does not receive wise direction. But it is precisely the role of the priest to give such direction; this is why the American hierarchy, in their statement of November 14, 1969, recommended that prudent priests be associated with the movement. For want of such direction, some groups in the country have gotten involved in unwise courses of action, such as dabbling in unhealthy types of spiritualism, carrying on unauthorized experiments with the liturgy, engaging in ecumenical endeavors not conformable to the guidelines set down by Vatican II, etc. These mistakes are indeed regrettable, but they make it all the more imperative that priests take part in the movement in the pastoral capacity proper to them. It should also be noted that the name, Pentecostal movement, has occasionally been adopted by groups that really have very little in common with the movement as it has been described above. This of course leads to unfortunate confusion, and means that any given group must be judged, not simply on the basis of its name, but by what it actually does.

In conclusion, I would like to declare that the Pentecostal movement has brought a fruitfulness and joy to my own priestly ministry greater than any I had known before. I would like to see this blessing shared by all my fellow priests.

If there is anything further about which you would like to hear from me, feel free to write.

Faternally yours in Christ, the High Priest,

Edward D. O'Connor, C.S.C.

EDO:gc

## APPENDIX D

A REPORT ON GLOSSOLALIA (SPEAKING IN TONGUES)  
BY THE COMMISSION ON EVANGELISM OF THE  
AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH



## A REPORT ON GLOSSOLALIA\*

(Speaking in Tongues)

Prepared by the Commission on Evangelism of The American Lutheran Church and Approved for Release by the Church Council

The Commission on Evangelism appointed the following people to serve on a Committee on Spiritual Gifts:

Chairman, Bruno Schlachtenhaufen, Pastor, Decorah, Iowa  
 Secretary, James Hanson, Pastor, Glendive, Montana  
 Naurice M. Nessel, Ph.D., President, Board of Trustees of  
 Lutheran General Hospital, Park Ridge, Illinois  
 Lowell J. Satre, Ph.D., Professor of New Testament, Luther  
 Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota  
 Paul Qualben, B.Th., M.D., Psychiatrist, Lutheran Medical  
 Center, Brooklyn, New York  
 Stanley Schneider, A.B., B.D., Professor of Homiletics,  
 Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbus, Ohio  
 W. H. Weiblen, Th.D., Assistant Professor of Systematic  
 Theology, Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa  
 Conrad Thompson, D.D., Director of Evangelism, Minneapolis,  
 Minnesota  
 Advisor, Mars A. Dale, D.D., Assistant Director of Evan-  
 gelism, Minneapolis, Minnesota

The Committee on Spiritual Gifts was asked to make a study of glosso-  
 lalia. A preliminary report was submitted by the Commission on Evan-  
 gelism at the General Convention of The American Lutheran Church at  
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin, October 24, 1962.

In preparing its final report the Committee on Spiritual Gifts asked  
 two of its members (Drs. Qualben and Satre) to make a ten-day field  
 study that included visitation in four congregations where speaking  
 in tongues exists. A third man, Dr. John Kildahl of New York, a  
 clinical psychologist, was coopted to serve with the field study com-  
 mittee. The three men are all on the clergy roster of The American  
 Lutheran Church.

The report of the Committee on Spiritual Gifts follows:

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\*Walter Wietzke, and Jack Hustad, *Towards A Mutual Understanding  
 of Neo-Pentecostalism* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1973).

## I. Introductory Statements

- A. We recognize that God comes to man through the Word and the Sacraments and that where these are, there is the Church. It is further recognized that God uses the Means of Grace in various ways to call men to Him and renew the life of His people.
- B. Speaking in tongues is one of several gifts of the Spirit described in Scripture (cf. 1 Cor. 12-14, especially 12:4-11).
- C. In previous documents it has been stressed that glossolalia is not normative for salvation. Neither is it normative for the Christian's growth in grace. The fruits of the Spirit do not necessarily accompany the gifts of the Spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 13:1-3).
- D. The testimony of the Christians who have witnessed to blessings associated with their speaking in tongues has been respected as being valid for these individuals.

## II. Impressions

- A. The integration of speaking in tongues into the life of a Lutheran congregation has proved very difficult, for both pastor and people. Divisions and tensions have been found in varying degrees in the congregations where glossolalia is known to exist.
- B. It is the pastor's privilege and responsibility to serve all in his parish, both through his public proclamation of the Gospel and administration of the Sacraments, and through his private soul care. When the pastor and some members speak in tongues in a congregation, it happens frequently that the other members feel the pastor is showing partiality, whether he is or not.
- C. If the pastor has often associated tongues and the Spirit, his sermons tend to be misunderstood, especially when he mentions the Holy Spirit.
- D. Because of the ease with which a group speaking in tongues may indulge in various forms of excess, the pastor's immediate, judicious, strong leadership is indispensable.
- E. The experience of glossolalia is no guarantee of Christian maturity and knowledge. Doctrinal instruction must be given promptly to those needing it, especially if they are to be received into church membership and accept positions of responsibility in the congregation.
- F. The pastor who does not speak in tongues is just as responsible for the spiritual well-being of glossolalists in his flock as for the soul care of the members who are not.
- G. It appears to be difficult for persons who speak in tongues to be reserved about it. For a variety of reasons it seems necessary to them to witness to the experience enthusiastically.

- H. It is possible to have unity with diversity if Christ is Lord and His love reigns over all. The respect of members of one group for those of the other is occasionally expressed, but a statement such as "Speaking in tongues is not Lutheran," does not make for a better spirit in the congregation nor does the "If-you-don't-like-it-lump-it" attitude.
- I. There are those that have had the experience of speaking in tongues but are no longer practicing it. They also need tolerance and understanding from the pastor and all other members of the congregation.

### III. Suggestions

- A. The Christian congregation should recognize that the spiritual life of Christians can be deepened by a variety of spiritual experiences.
- B. Any group or person introducing a new element into a congregation has a grave responsibility for doing this in such a way that peace and unity are not destroyed. Responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the congregation is shared by all.
- C. Self-righteousness tends to be accentuated in situations where diversity of opinions and practices exists. All members of a congregation, whether glossolalists or not, should be aware of this besetting sin.
- D. The ministry of intercessory prayer is an integral part of the worship life of the Lutheran Church and finds expression both in various liturgical services and in many other forms of group and individual experience in the congregation.
  - 1. The Committee sees the value of fellowship groups which serve as a "bridge" for those non-members who would not immediately feel at home at a Sunday morning service of worship.
  - 2. If a particular Bible Study or prayer group has become identified as one where there is, has been, or may be speaking in tongues, it may be advisable to start another group in which there would be no speaking in tongues whatsoever.
- E. Those who speak in tongues must be encouraged to press on to a concern for "the whole counsel of God." There is a danger of over-emphasis on glossolalia on the part of some, with an unbalanced, distorted Christian perspective as the outcome. By definition heresy is the selection of and concentration on a part, with a resultant distortion of the whole.

- F. The total well-being of each individual must be respected. A meeting at which there may be glossolalia should be conducted according to the prevailing practice in the congregation just as any other meeting in the church. Particular caution must be exercised as to the length of such meetings.
- G. It is recognized that a combination of factors may result in an intense desire to witness to the experience of speaking in tongues. It is also recognized, however, that in many places good judgment has not prevailed and the "witnessing" has deteriorated into promotion and exploitation. This is deplored and to be avoided. The following promotional activities have been observed in some congregations of The American Lutheran Church.
1. Escorting parishioners to meetings where speaking in tongues is being exalted and promoted, whether such meetings be in a Lutheran, Episcopalian, Pentecostal, or other church, or home.
  2. Helping people uncover their feelings of need for more spiritual "power," "peace," "boldness," and then presenting glossolalia rather than or in addition to God Triune in His Gospel as the answer.
  3. Praying for extended periods of time with the "unlearned" that they may speak in tongues.
  4. Prolonging the meeting to the point of wearing down defenses, that the phenomenon may be experienced.
  5. Preaching sermons to promote speaking in tongues.
  6. Prolonged laying on of hands to encourage the experience of glossolalia.
  7. Speaking in tongues in public assembly for the purpose of getting others to do so.
- H. It is incorrect to apply Paul's injunction "Earnestly desire the spiritual gifts" directly to glossolalia without qualification. Attention is directed to the following facts:
1. Paul's exhortation in 1 Cor. 14:1 is followed by the Greek words mallon de. An authoritative Greek lexicon says the following about the translation and meaning of these words: "'but rather,' 'or rather,' or simply 'rather' introduces an expression or thought that supplements and thereby corrects what has preceded" (Arndt-Gingrich). In other words, Paul's command in 14:1 cannot be applied to tongues without qualification.
  2. Similar is Paul's statement in 1 Cor. 14:5: "Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but rather (mallon de) to prophesy."

3. I Cor. 14:39 is a commentary on 14:1. Paul exhorts: "Earnestly desire to prophesy" and adds: "Do not forbid speaking in tongues." It is significant that in these concluding remarks Paul does not say: "Earnestly desire to speak in tongues."
  4. In 1 Cor. 12:31 Paul says, "But earnestly desire the higher gifts." In the light of the general context in 1 Cor. 12:14, and especially of the verses cited above, glossolalia is not included in the higher gifts. Paul, then, gives no unqualified exhortation to people to try to speak in tongues. He saw fit to permit, not promote.
- I. Some alleged interpretation of tongues has been called prophecy; we cannot but be skeptical of any saying which claims to be prophetic unless it is clearly a correct exposition and forthtelling of the message of the Scriptures. Furthermore, since we find no biblical warrant for identifying the interpretation of tongues with prophecy, we caution against doing so.
- J. The following suggestions are made regarding the public and private use of speaking in tongues in our congregations:
1. If glossolalia is practiced, its use should be in harmony with the spirit of Paul's words in 1 Cor. 12-14. Point number 2 of the statement on speaking in tongues by the Faculty of Luther Seminary expresses a principle of biblical interpretation which it is relevant to state here: "It is a dangerous hermeneutical practice to take what Paul said to a particular congregation, in a specific place, at a certain time, on a special occasion and apply it literally and indiscriminately to congregations today. (Cf. 1 Cor. 14:35b: 'For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.' This statement is cited because it is within a section dealing primarily with "tongues" and because it is not applied literally and indiscriminately in the Church today.) Nevertheless, Paul's way of dealing with this problem (one of the "matters about which (they) wrote" (7:1) in the congregation at Corinth gives clues for the way in which it might be dealt with today.)"
  2. In a congregation where there is speaking in tongues but where it is not practiced publicly, the public practice should not be initiated.
  3. In a congregation where there is a public meeting at which glossolalia is practiced, the question whether the public practice should be continued or not should be weighed by the pastor and the members practicing glossolalia in the light of the following considerations:

- a) Paul's very low estimate of the value of speaking or praying publicly in tongues as compared with speaking or praying intelligibly in public (1 Cor. 14: 13-18).
  - b) The counsel Paul gives in Romans 14 and 1 Cor. 13. (The most subtle form of legalism may have overtaken him who insists: "I have a right . . .")
  - c) What such public practice is doing to the life of the congregation.
  - d) What the public practice means to those engaging in it.
  - e) The attitude of the church council of the congregation.
  - f) The advice of the district president.
  - g) The fact that in all such matters as this the congregation is sovereign.
4. Speaking in tongues in private for the individual's personal edification is not to be forbidden.
- K. Through the ages the Church yearns for spiritual renewal, in some periods more than in others, at some times more consciously than at other times. The present scene is characterized by many expressions of "the thirst for the living God." Let the Church thank God for Jesus of Nazareth, the risen, ascended Lord Christ who made Pentecost possible (Acts 2:33), who is the One preached and present in Peter's Pentecost sermon. For the Christ who comes in Word and Sacrament to inhabit our faith and to be our righteousness, let the Church be unceasingly thankful. Let her continue to thank God for the Holy Spirit, given to him who is baptized into Christ by the Father through water and His Word of promise. Let the Church pray that more of its people be "faithful to their covenant of Baptism even unto the end." It is urged that the whole Christian Church "continue to pray regularly for the gifts of the Holy Spirit with the assurance that this prayer is being and will continue to be answered."
- L. Our day presents a glorious challenge to the Church of "The Word Alone, Faith Alone, Grace Alone." Even as "all the parables of Jesus compel his hearers to come to a decision about his person and mission," so let every hearer in our congregations today be confronted with the Living Jesus who in His Gospel compels men, now and to the end of this age, to come to a decision about Him. Let us pray for, work for, anticipate, thank God for awakening, renewal, revival, conversion, growth, depending in our congregations. It should be the concern of every pastor and parishioner to try to minister effectively to each member of the community, whether he be spiritually dead, alive, or revived, and regardless of the phenomenon or phenomena which may or may not accompany his experience with God.

Creator Spirit of the Living God, Come!  
Keep bringing us our alive Lord, Jesus Christ;  
keep teaching us to pray.  
And we shall praise Thee forever, O living  
Triune God!

Prepared for distribution by the Commission on Evangelism of  
The American Lutheran Church, 422 South Fifth Street  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415

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